

Harry Potter and the Story of Eliza

Chapter One

July 24

Dear Diary,

I got another death-threat today from some kid. I sent an owl to Mother about it. Hopefully she'll take me away from this school. It's bad enough having that prophecy hanging over my head without the notes.

-Eliza

July 25

Dear Diary,

Mother sent her owl back. I can't believe it! She's sending me to my father in England for the school year! I'm going to be a fifth year at Hogwarts School of witchcraft and wizardry! I'm not sure how much I like the title, but it seems that in England, witches are just the word for a female wizard. I hope the students are more serious about learning at Hogwarts. Mother says they are, and she should know. She was in the house of Slytherin at Hogwarts. So was Father, but as you know, I haven't seen him in nine years. I hope he likes me. I really don't want the names to continue. I can't tell you how much being called Snake-girl and Serpent woman annoy me. It's not really my fault I'm a parsel-mouth.

-Eliza

July 26

Dear Diary,

I packed my bags and my broomstick today. Mother is sending me off on the knight bus to England, even though it did cost a lot. I'm waiting for the bus at the front of the school now. I'll be in England with my father tomorrow. I can't wait! I have been waiting for years to meet my father. I have to go! The Knight bus just pulled up!

-Eliza

Eliza picked up her bags and her broomstick and handed them to the conductor, a shy looking boy with dirty blonde hair that looked as if he just got out of school. Bidding a haughty farewell at Wealver's School of Magic, she happily boarded the bus, thinking about how she was going to do things differently at Hogwarts.

The bus trip was not a pleasant one. The bus was jerky, and kept jumping hundreds of miles at a time. Instead of the seats of an ordinary muggle bus, there were beds that slid across the floor whenever the driver, a middle aged Wizard, yanked on the wheel. Eliza was ushered into a bed, and she passed the time by reading a muggle fantasy called 'Ella Enchanted'. It was quite a good book, even if the muggles had everything mixed up.

An hour later the Knight bus pulled up to a small town.

"This is Hogsmeade." The conductor said shyly. "Your mother said you were to go to number 713 on Staff Street."

"Thank you." said Eliza, and stepped off the bus. The conductor handed her bags to her. With a snap the doors of the bus shut and with an ear-splitting BANG the bus disappeared. "713 on Staff," Eliza reminded herself. Well, the bus had dropped her off on Staff. Number 713 was just a few houses away. Eliza grabbed her bag and walked to the door of number 713.

Eliza, rather timidly, rapped on the door. After a long moment, a man with greasy looking black hair and black eyes opened it. Her Father looked nothing like Eliza had expected. Her photograph of him showed him young and smiling broadly, but it was the same person, never the less, without the warmth.

"Eliza?" he asked after staring at her a moment. Eliza nodded. "Good. I've been expecting you. Come in,"

The house was dimly lit, which struck Eliza as a bit depressing. The rooms were decorated in dark green and brown, and would have looked wonderful in the sunlight, but the lights were all a dim yellow. The house was very neat, almost too neat. A little clutter always made Eliza feel more casual and not so uptight.

"This will be your room for the rest of the summer." Eliza's father said dully. He showed her a room with a small bed and a huge window with sunlight pouring out of it. The walls of the room were an earthy beige, with forest green accents. There was a wooden dresser on the far side of the room, and everything seemed to match.

"It's beautiful," said Eliza. Her Father nodded. Eliza put her bags on the floor to unpack.

"Eliza?"

"Yes?"

"It's nice to see you again," her Father said, rather timidly.

Eliza smiled. "You too." Her Father left the room, and Eliza started to unpack, smiling. "I am the luckiest girl in the world, Eliza Diawna Snape."

Chapter Two

Hogsmeade was a very cool town, Eliza learned later. Zonko's joke shop was one of the most fun places she's ever been to, and she simply couldn't stay away from Honeydukes, with all its candies and chocolates. Eliza always did have a deep craving for sugar.

The only bad thing, as far as Eliza was concerned, about Hogsmeade was that there were no bookstores in the entire town. Her father, Eliza soon learned, liked to be left alone to brew his potions, and let Eliza roam around the town as she pleased.

One day when she was coming home from Zonko's, loaded up with several tricks to scare the first years with, she found her father waiting for her at the front door.

"Eliza, we have to get you your school things for tomorrow."

Eliza looked at him. Why would she have to get things for school? She had enough clothes. "Why?" she asked.

"What do mean by 'why'? We'll be leaving tomorrow to get you your books, your robes, and your cauldron. Is there a problem with that?" her father snapped. Eliza nodded meekly.

"I didn't know the schools here made you bring your own books, that's all. In my old school, we were given our books for the year when we first started class." Eliza said carefully. The more she got to know her father, the more she realized how easy it was to make him mad. Eliza entered the house to hide the pranks she bought in Zonko's in her dresser, and started writing in her diary.

Harry Potter was not having the best vacation. Most of his problem concerned how on earth he was going to pick up his school books, since the Dursleys had once again locked Hedwig in her cage to keep her from writing his friends or his Godfather, who was still hiding from the ministry of magic. Ron's owl hadn't been in either, lately, and there had been no word from Hermione. It was looking as if he'd have to ask the Dursleys to drive him to Diagon Alley, which was not going to be the happiest scene in the world.

He could just see it now. 'Uncle Vernon, I know you hate my guts 'cause I'm a wizard, but, out of the goodness of your heart, could you drive me to a

magic door in London so I can buy some wizarding books?" Wasn't going to happen.

From downstairs Harry could here Dudley moaning to his aunt and uncle how there wasn't any good food to eat. Harry grinned slightly. Uncle Vernon's company hadn't been doing very well for a while, and the lack of rich, fatty foods in the house had taken a large toll on Dudley. He actually looked somewhat normal, instead of a blimp who's weight threatened to cave in the house.

Harry went back to the problem of his schoolbooks. He could offer to pay the Dursleys a little gold...

Harry shook his head abruptly. What was he thinking? If the Dursleys knew that he had any gold, they would take all of it, and he'd be in a much worse position then he started with.

Harry absently started making his bed, listening absently to the telephone ringing downstairs.

"Harry!" Aunt Petunia yelled. Harry jumped out of bed and ran down the stairs, wondering what he had done now. Aunt Petunia was holding the phone with a puzzled look on her face. "It's for you."

"Who is it?" Harry asked, wondering who on earth would be calling for him.

"She says her name is Hermione Granger," Aunt Petunia said, then started handing over the phone. Then she brought it back to her ear. "You don't know him from school, do you?" she asked the receiver. Harry nearly winced, then caught himself and held a blank expression. "Oh... he is... I was just wondering..." Aunt Petunia handed Harry the phone.

"Hi, Harry!"

"Hey, Hermione. What's up?" Harry asked as Aunt Petunia left the room.

"Nothing much. Is it safe to talk?" Hermione asked. Harry glanced around the room. No one within listening distance.

"It's safe. My Aunt went into the kitchen. I'll tell you if anyone comes." Harry thought he heard a faint click. "Hermione, you still there?"

"Yes... Listen, I was wondering when you'd get your schoolbooks." Hermione said.

"Thank you, Hermione. "I haven't made any plans. How about you?" Harry asked.

"Well, we were going to go to London tomorrow. Think we could give you a lift?" Hermione asked.

"That would be so great." Harry said. "You know my Aunt and Uncle would never drive me to London to get my spell books."

“Oh, I almost forgot to tell you. Sirius is staying with my family, as a dog, but he’s coming to Diagon Alley with me. Oh, did you hear! I got named a Prefect!” Hermione squealed.

“That’s great!” Harry said, wondering why in the world Hermione would sound surprised. “I guess I’ll see you tomorrow.”

“Great! Well, bye!” Hermione said, then hung up.

Harry put the phone down and sat down on the couch. Finally, things were looking good for a change...

Aunt Petunia stormed into the room. “Harry, get to your room!” she snarled. Harry looked at her, surprised, then walked to the stairs.

From the stairs you could see a bit of the kitchen. As Harry was going up to the second floor, he saw why his Aunt was so mad. The kitchen phone was off the hook, and by the looks of it, Aunt Petunia, the noisiest woman on the block, had listened in on the extension.

Chapter Three

Told by Hermione Granger

I put down the phone as my Mom entered the family room. She smiled. “So, are we giving the famous Harry Potter a ride tomorrow?”

“Yep!” I chirped.

“That’s great. Hey, I’m making chocolate chip cookies. Want to come have a batter sample?” Mom asked. I smiled a little.

“Mom! You’re a dentist! You shouldn’t be making cookies! Think about the harmful effect that would have on my teeth!” I teased. My Mother has a very pronounced sweet tooth, and I love to tease her for it.

“Oh, repent! Woe is me! I swear to undo the horrosity of my evil ways and chocolate!” my Mother also likes to use sarcasm. I grinned and ran to the kitchen. “Don’t eat all the batter! Your sister is going to want half!” Mother called.

I got a spoon and dipped it in the batter. Sublime. My mother is the most wonderful cook in town, possibly in the country. She taught me a lot about cooking. That’s one of the reasons I’m so good at potions, even if Professor Snape is an awful teacher.

“Hermione!” I turned around. My Father and my older sister were standing in the doorway. “What have I taught you about health and keeping your teeth clean?” Father asked impatiently. Dortha, my sister, brightened and grabbed a spoon. “Will you children ever learn?!”

“Save some for me!” Mother ran to the silverware drawer.

"Will you females ever learn?!" Father said, waving his hands in the air. "The least you could do is bake it first!"

"Bake it? The dough's the best part!" Dortha looked mortally offended. She does that very well. She looks a little like me, with brown curly hair though it's no where as thick as mine is. She'll be turning eighteen in two months or so. My mother, on the other hand, is very skinny and has blond, straight hair. My Father's hair is straight and thin as well, so I have no clue where I got my thick, curly brown mess from.

"I agree," Mother said. Father threw up his hands, stalked to the family room, and started reading a book about gum disease to spite us.

"So, tell us Hermione, are we picking Harry up?" Father called into the hall.

"Yep," I said. "His Aunt and Uncle won't drive him,"

"You know, Hermione, someday you're going to have to show me some magic," Dortha said. I sighed. Dortha has been jealous of my magic for five years now, ever since I got into Hogwarts.

"You're coming to Diagon alley with us, aren't you? You can see all the magic you want there." I said. "Oh, that reminds me! I have to go add something for Professor Flitwick's essay on the use of silencing charms!"

Actually, I had already finished it. I just like to give Dortha a hard time. Dortha crossed her arms as I ran into my room.

The next day my Mom and Dad packed up the car. You wouldn't believe some of the things they thought to bring.

"I don't think a fishing pole will be needed, Dad," I said.

"But what if we pass a stream on the way?"

Anyway, after half an hour I managed to talk some sense into them, and we left for Harry's house.

When we pulled up to #4 Private Drive, my first thought was that we must have pulled up to the wrong house. It was neat and clean and definitely not Harry's style. I walked up to the front door and rang the bell. The door opened at once. "Hermione!" Harry said.

I looked in the doorway. There was no one there. "Where are you?"

"I've got the invisibility cloak on. Let's go before my Aunt catches us," Harry pulled the cloak off, and walked to the car.

"Nice to meet you, Harry," Dortha said.

"Nice to meet you. Thank you for giving me a ride, Mr. and Mrs. Granger." Harry said.

"Oh, it was no problem." My mom smiled as Harry climbed into the back seat. Sirius was sitting in the very back of our car. He smiled as Harry got

in. My family still doesn't know that 'Mr. Black' as I call him, isn't a dog. Crookshanks purred as Harry started petting him.

We pulled away from #4, just as a large man with a black mustache lumbered out into the porch and started shouting.

"Poor Uncle Vernon," Harry smirked. "I think he was expecting broomsticks."

Draco Malfoy looked down the stairway. His Father appeared in the hallway at the bottom of the stairs.

"Where's Wyrren?"

"Off getting make up on, I expect." Draco said. "I don't want to be late just because sister dear had to get made up to go shopping."

"I'm done! I'm done, all right!" Wyrren marched into the hall, bringing the scent of heavy perfume with her. Draco nearly choked.

"Wyrren, you're going to wipe out Diagon Alley with that on!"

"Draco? Shut up." Wyrren spoke as if she were bored. "How would you know anyway? Your girlfriend has absolutely no taste in clothes or make up."

"She's not my girlfriend," Draco growled.

"Oh, right, so sorry, I forgot. She dumped you for a Hufflepuff sixth year." Wyrren smirked. Draco felt like slapping her. Draco had gotten a letter two days ago from Pansy Parkinson, saying that he was a moron and that she was going out with some dunce of a Hufflepuff. Draco pitied the fool. Wyrren smirked and shook her hair laughing as she descended the stairs.

"Ready to go, Wyrren?" Mr. Malfoy asked. Wyrren nodded. Mr. Malfoy walked down the hall to the transportation doorway. It was quite an expensive feature to the house. It would transport anyone anywhere they wanted to go. Blue lightning flashed across its black clouded surface.

"Diagon Alley!" Mr. Malfoy commanded. Instantly the door showed a picture-perfect view of Diagon Alley. Mr. Malfoy, Wyrren, and Draco stepped into the door.

* * *

Severus Snape glanced at Eliza. Eliza was dressed nicely in a casual sort of way, in all dark green, he noticed approvingly. "Green is a very good color on you, Eliza. It brings out some color in your eyes."

Eliza smiled. "Thanks."

"Green is the color of the house Slytherin. Green and Silver. I will expect you to act as a Slytherin and a Snape should." Severus said. Eliza felt a

bit uneasy. Her father had just assumed she would be in Slytherin. What bothered her was that whenever he spoke of the other houses, he was insulting them. Hufflepuff, as he made it out to be, was the house of idiots who milled about all day, believing anything anyone said. Ravenclaw was for the people with no life, whose main goal in life was to stick their noses up. Gryffindor was the houses for the show-offs, the high-and-mighty troublemakers. Eliza wasn't buying any of it. Her father was the head of the Slytherin house, and he was rather mean tempered. She'd just have to get other people's opinions on the houses at Diagon Alley.

"The name Snape is a proud Slytherin name. I will expect you to live up to the family name."

What would her father say if she told him she didn't want to be in Slytherin? Eliza held her tongue. Severus Snape offered her a pinch of floo powder. Eliza took it, and walked up to the fireplace.

"Diagon Alley!"

* * *

Mr. and Mrs. Granger let Harry, Hermione, Dortha, Sirius, and Crookshanks off at the Leaky Cauldron, saying Dortha was old enough to watch and Hermione and Harry. Harry walked by Hermione as they entered the Leaky Cauldron, then out into Diagon Alley. Dortha was shocked.

"Incredible," she breathed as Hermione replaced her wand back inside her bag.

"Welcome to Diagon Alley," Harry smiled. "We need to go to Gringotts, of course."

Harry led the way to Gringotts and got some money out of his vault. Dortha exchanged her pounds for wizard gold.

Once back out in the streets, Harry asked "How many books do you have this year, Hermione?"

"Eleven," Hermione said promptly. Dortha sighed loudly. Harry wasn't the least bit surprised.

"Well, first stop is in Flourish and Blotts." Hermione said, then headed for the bookstore as if it was sucking her in. Harry groaned softly. "You'll never come out, Hermione!" He felt like laughing.

Hermione made puppy eyes at Harry. Harry cringed, then walked into the bookstore reluctantly. "Black, you and Crookshanks stay outside." Hermione said. Sirius trotted to the door and sat down. Crookshanks did the same, but with far more dignity. Dortha cast a nervous glance at Sirius and Crookshanks, then went inside the shop.

Inside the shop was crowded with students getting their school supplies. Dortha looked in one of the books on display. Hermione grabbed a copy of all the required books, then made a beeline for the ones that weren't required. Harry shook his head. Hermione inside a bookstore was like Dudley in a candy store giving away free samples.

Harry glanced out of the window and immediately wished that he hadn't. Professor Snape was striding up to the doors of the store, talking to a girl who looked thoroughly miserable. She was really pretty, he noticed, and she looked a lot like Hermione. What she was doing with Snape he had no idea.

Pretending not to notice either of the two, Harry buried most of his face in a book, the first one he could find. Snape stopped outside of the bookshop, handed some money to her, then set off with great speed to the apothecary.

The girl looked at Snape for a moment, then stepped inside the shop, reading her list carefully.

"Hi," Harry said, putting down the book he was holding. Eliza looked up sharply, then smiled.

"You go to Hogwarts?" She asked.

Harry nodded. "I'm a fifth year. I... I haven't seen you around before. What year are you?"

"Oh, I'm a transfer student. I'll be a fifth year, too." Eliza said. "So what's your name?"

Harry sighed. "Harry," he said simply, hoping she wouldn't start staring at him, demanding to see his scar.

Eliza smiled sourly. "Harry Potter. I'm Eliza. You know Professor Snape doesn't like you?"

"Yes, I noticed that." Harry snorted. "Speaking of Snape, how come he was with you?"

Eliza bit her lip. Should she tell him? "He's escorting me." Eliza paused. "I was... looking forward to potions, but now I'm not sure... is Professor Snape disliked much? Is he mean?" Eliza hesitated, realizing his was the wrong person to ask this too.

"Trust me. He's mean; all the other teachers have a grudge against him. All the students except Slytherin hate him." Harry went on, describing every time he had bullied Neville, told Hermione she was a show-off know-it-all. Eliza looked more and more uneasy with every story. She would need to get more people's opinion, but just the same...

What if it were known throughout the school that Snape's daughter was going. She'd be instantly sneered at. People would walk to the other side of the rooms when she'd get near. Just like at the last school...

"That sounds bad." Eliza said. "Do you think his entire family's like that?"

"I don't know. I would think so. I, personally wouldn't want to meet any of his family, but then, you never know." Harry shrugged. "I don't even think he has a family."

Eliza shrugged as well, then picked out her books quickly, before her father wondered what was taking her so long at the apothecary.

Harry watched Eliza get her books and run out the door. "I wonder why she's really with Snape." He said to himself, then finished getting his own books and dragged Hermione to the other stores.

"So where are we going now?" Eliza asked as she rechecked her list. She had gotten all of her school supplies.

"The Magical Menagerie," Snape said. "I wanted to get you a pet."

Eliza looked up at him in excitement. "How about a snake?"

Severus turned his head slowly to Eliza. "A snake? I suppose that would be alright." Snape was delighted. He was worried that Eliza might be more like a Gryffindor than a true Slytherin. Eliza smiled.

"I prefer the bigger ones. They're smarter. The smarter ones are much better company."

"You want to train it?" Snape asked in an amused tone.

"Snakes don't need training." Eliza stepped inside the shop, gazing in wonder at all the many different cats, bats, turtles, squirrels, rats, even owls. There, on the far side of the wall, she saw them, a whole wall full of snakes.

"Pick whichever one you want. Just as long as you think you can control it." Snape said, his voice filled with pride.

Eliza approached the snakes quietly. "Hello, my friends," She said in Parsletounge quietly. No need to announce that she was a Parsel mouth to the entire alley.

Snape watched in amazement as all the snakes in the store raised their heads at once to look at her. Eliza walked back and forth. What noise Severus could here seemed to be soft hissing.

A few minutes later, Eliza bought one of the larger snakes, a seven foot long dark green one. Snape looked at her. "You're a parselmouth." He said, more of a fact than a suspicion.

Eliza nodded. Snape shook his head admiringly. Eliza, dressed in green, holding the very symbol of Slytherin in her hands, walked out into the alley.

Draco Malfoy swayed a little as he landed in the alley. He felt dizzy, as if he'd been spinning in a room then suddenly come to a halt. His father and his sister landed right beside him, Wyrren almost collapsing, to Draco's delight.

At once Wyrren was demanding to be taken to Madam Malkins. Lucius shrugged and walked her there, shouting at Draco to get his school supplies. Draco shrugged and walked toward the bookshop first, then stopped dead. Pansy Parkinson was standing in the doorway, almost leaning on a burly boy's arm.

What was he going to do? Go into the bookshop and make himself look like a fool? Then, Draco smiled. This would be the perfect time to show Pansy that he didn't care about her in the slightest. All he would need was a girl to pretend to be his new girlfriend. How he was going to find a girl to play the part, Draco had no clue. He glanced up and down the street. No one that he would even consider for a deal like that.

Professor Snape? What was he doing here? Draco stared as his potions master walked along the streets toward the leaky cauldron. Draco edged away. Professor Snape may be his favorite teacher, but going out of his way to say 'hi' wasn't exactly what Draco had in mind, either. Then he saw her.

Following Snape was a very, very pretty girl, exactly his age, dressed in forest green and holding a snake. She had thick, curly brown hair, shinning blue-gray eyes, and was very thin. Her face was perfect, heart shaped, healthy looking tan skin. She was so much prettier then Pansy it wasn't even worth it to compare the two.

"Hello, Professor," Draco called to Snape.

"Hello, Draco." Snape stopped. "Oh, Draco, I'd like you to meet—"

"Eliza," Eliza said at once. She had a very American accent. Draco nodded his head.

"Very nice to meet you. I haven't seen you at the school before, have I?" Draco asked.

"I'm new. A transfer from America." Eliza smiled. Draco smiled more.

"Draco, why don't you show Eliza around. Get her aquatinted with everybody." Snape said.

"Um, alright..." Eliza said slowly.

Draco pretended to bow. "Of course, sir. Will that count in my grade as extra credit?" Draco asked. Eliza laughed.

"Meet me in Flourish and Blotts in an hour," Snape called.

Draco looked over at Eliza and started walking away from Snape. "So, are you a pureblood?" Draco asked.

"Yes," Eliza said. "I come from a long line of Slytherins."

Draco couldn't believe his luck. "You want to go to Flourish and Blotts first? I have to pick up my books, and there are always crowds of people there. You'll probably meet a lot of kids from school."

"Sure," Eliza said, petting her snake, Slyther, as she walked.

"So, how long have you known Professor Snape?" Eliza asked.

"As long as I've been in this school. Four years." Draco said.

"How are the teachers there?" Eliza asked.

Draco made a face. "Not very good. Professor McGonagall is so strict it's like you can't breath in her class. Oh, she teaches transmogrification." Draco said quickly, seeing Eliza's confusion. "The charms teacher, Professor Flitwick, is a little, squeaky wizard who I could never get two words of sense from. They're all like that, except Snape. He's the only good teacher at the school."

"I heard the job for 'Defense against the Dark Arts' was jinxed." Eliza said. They were almost to the bookshop by now. Draco could see Pansy at the check out counter.

"Oh, it is. Every year I've been here, I've had a new one every year. Professor Snape really wants the job, but Dumbledore won't let him have it. So I've had lame teacher after lame teacher." Draco said, quickening his pace a bit. Without knowing it, Eliza quickened hers as well.

Draco held the door open for Eliza when they entered. The first thing Draco saw was Pansy, staring at him triumphantly. Then Pansy saw Eliza, and she started looking confused.

"Eliza, this is Pansy, a Slytherin fifth year." Draco said. "Pansy," Draco smiled sweetly at her. "this is Eliza."

Eliza wondered if Pansy usually got red in the face and looked like she was going to knock some one's head off when she met people. Pansy clenched her fists. "How dare you—" she whispered. Draco looked confused, and Pansy marched out of the store.

"Um, I was going to tell you, she's a little psycho, Eliza." Draco said. Eliza nodded.

"Apparently," she said.

Draco took her through the store, introducing her to almost everybody he knew. Why he did that, Draco wasn't sure. He had gotten his revenge on Pansy. Draco wondered every time he saw someone he knew. Eliza waited for him while he got his books, his potion ingredients, and his quills and ink. Then followed him to his favorite store, Quality Quiditch Supplies.

"Do you play quiditch, Eliza?" Draco asked as he walked into the shop.

Eliza sighed a little. "In a way. I love riding my broomstick, and I'm really fast, but I'm not very good at quiditch. The only position I could get is Seeker."

"I play as seeker for Slytherin," Draco said.

Eliza smiled happily, making her blue-gray eyes sparkle. "Really?"

Draco nodded.

"I would love to see you play. What's the Slytherin team like?" Eliza asked enthusiastically. Draco smiled and started explaining all about his team,

about the games they won third year, even if they didn't win the cup, they had come close to it. Eliza listened to every word, while Draco looked at the broomsticks in the shop and gazed longingly at the Firebolt on display and talked at the same time.

Eliza suddenly stopped. "Um, I have less than five minutes to meet Professor Snape. I'd better go."

"Oh..." Draco felt suddenly disappointed. "I guess I'll see you at Hogwarts."

"Sure! See you later!" and Eliza ran from the store. Draco watched her, wondering why on earth he was disappointed to see her go.

Chapter Four

Eliza nervously wrote down what she had heard in Diagon Alley in her diary. Her father was down the hall, in his study, which was filled with creepy looking potion ingredients and books on the dark arts.

On an impulse, Eliza walked into the study. Snape didn't even look up.

"Um... father?"

Professor Snape put his book down and looked at Eliza. "What do you want?"

"Um... I was ... I mean... I know you don't like Harry Potter. I was wondering...why?" Eliza asked, ready to sprint out of the room if Snape was in a bad mood.

Her father sighed. "If you want to know, then I suppose I will tell you." He said slowly. Eliza sat down and listened intently to Snape's story.

Harry Potter waited by the front door of #4, Privet Drive, waiting for Uncle Vernon and Aunt Petunia to drive him to the Kings Cross Station. Aunt Petunia and Uncle Vernon hadn't even noticed that Harry had been gone most of the day. Hermione's family had driven him to Diagon Alley, so he had managed to talk Uncle Vernon into driving him.

From halfway across the house Harry could hear Dudley protesting Uncle Vernon's decision loudly. Harry sighed and heaved his trunk into the back of the car.

Finally, Uncle Vernon marched out of the house, his face an angry purple. "Get in." he snapped. Harry nodded and got into the back seat of the car.

Uncle Vernon remained silent the entire trip, with the few exceptions where he stuck his head out the window to swear at people going too slow.

When he reached Kings Cross, Uncle Vernon dropped Harry off, threw out Harry's trunk, and drove off without another word.

Harry, feeling better than he had all summer, except maybe at Diagon Alley, walked into platform 9 and $\frac{3}{4}$ and boarded the Hogwarts express.

"Crabbe, Goyle, have you seen a girl with curly brown hair and blue eyes come on board?" Draco asked. Crabbe shrugged. Goyle's mouth opened as he thought.

"I saw Granger." He said finally.

Draco sighed. Really, he had to make friends with slightly more intelligent life forms. A dog would be nice. Better looking, too, for that matter. "No, I mean, someone else. Her name's Eliza, and I've been waiting for her."

Goyle's mouth was still open as he shook his head stupidly. Draco rolled his eyes.

"Just forget it."

Draco had been looking in compartment windows ever since the train started moving. Before that, he had almost missed the train looking through the crowds for Eliza. What if she had missed the train?

Draco crossed his arms, disappointed. This was going to be a long, boring ride.

Eliza packed up her trunk around three. As she now lived in Hogsmeade, she didn't need to take the train, since this was where the train pulled up. She was wearing her black Hogwarts robes, which looked plain and dull on her. Slyther watched her with amusement.

"*Black isn't your color,*" Slyther said. "*I still don't understand why you wear those things. How do you move in that? Isn't it confining?*"

"*Just accept that you don't understand it. I don't either, if it makes you happier;*" Eliza said. "Father, I'm done!"

Severus walked into her room. "A little early, don't you think? The train won't be here for another six hours." Snape shrugged. "I suppose we should go early anyway, on second thought. Get another bed in the Slytherin dormitory."

"The professor's won't put the bed up there until I've been sorted." Eliza said, annoyed once again by her father's assumption that she would be in Slytherin.

Severus shrugged. "Do you want to go to the castle now?"

Eliza nodded. "I'd like to meet the rest of the teachers and find out where my classes are. I'm a little behind in those respects."

Severus looked at her for a moment. "Alright. I'll get your trunk up to the school. You can walk, since you're so eager to get there."

Minerva McGonagall was walking down the halls towards the front entrance when Severus walked in the castle, floating a large trunk in front of him. At the top of the stairs he lowered the trunk to the floor.

"About time you got here, Severus." McGonagall said. "But what are you doing with the trunk?"

"Eliza wanted to come early." Severus said.

"Eliza?" Minerva raised an eyebrow.

"My daughter, Eliza Diawna Snape. She's transferring from America. I thought I had told all the staff."

"Not me," Minerva said. "Where is she?"

"She's coming. I had a bit of a head start on her. You wouldn't happen to mind showing her around, would you? I have work to do." Snape said casually then walked away in the general direction of the dungeons.

Minerva stared at his retreating form. She had half a mind to just walk away, and let the Snape's take care of themselves. Eliza Snape...Minerva sighed. Just what the school needed: another Snape. She could just picture her now, a pale girl with greasy black straight hair and dark eyes, sneering in an arrogant fashion.

"Excuse me?"

Minerva turned, and blinked. Eliza looked nothing like Severus. She was a very pretty girl, with tanned skin and a clear complexion. She had a heart shaped face and a small mouth, with blue gray eyes. Her thick, curly brown hair was pulled into a bun that it was struggling to be liberated from. She resembled Snape in only very slight and unnoticeable features. They both had identical eye shapes, and her nose had a trace of a high bridge, although nothing as noticeable as Severus'...

"You're Eliza Snape?" Professor McGonagall asked. Eliza nodded.

"Your father to...asked me to show you around the castle. I'm Professor McGonagall, I teach transfiguration." Professor McGonagall started walking around, showing Eliza the castle. After a while, Minerva was amazed that she could possibly be related to Severus.

"Professor, can I ask you something?" Eliza asked after about an hour of going from corridor to corridor.

"Certainly, Eliza"

"Well, my father, Professor Snape, thinks that I'm going to be in Slytherin, no questions asked." Eliza said. Professor McGonagall rolled her eyes. If Severus thought that this girl belonged in Slytherin, he was as stupid as he was mean. "But, from what I've heard, I don't want to be in Slytherin. I would rather be in Gryffindor, or Ravenclaw."

"You'll be sorted by the sorting hat. We never just put you in a house with out it,"

"That's the problem. My last name is 'Snape'. No one in Gryffindor will even want to come near me. I don't want to be known as 'Snape's daughter'. I want to be known as Eliza." Eliza looked pleadingly at Professor McGonagall. "Is there any way I could be introduced as 'Eliza Diawna'?"

Professor McGonagall stopped walking and looked at Eliza for the longest time. Finally, she said, "I'll see what I can do,"

"Eliza, I have work to do around the castle. If you would like to wander the grounds a bit, or explore the castle, you may do that." Minerva said after a moment.

"Yes, Professor."

"I will look forward to having you in my class," Minerva said, and walked briskly down the hall.

Harry looked out the window of the Hogwarts Express. "I think the train is slowing down."

Hermione checked her watch. "Just in time."

Ron groaned. "Don't even say the word 'feast', Harry, Hermione. I think I'm going to be sick."

Hermione gave Ron her scolding look. "When you eat thirty chocolate frogs, or so, looking for Agripa, you're going to feel sick." Harry struggled to keep from laughing.

Ron groaned again. "Add 'chocolate frogs' to the list."

Harry smiled at Hermione. Hermione blushed. "You know, Ron, I don't even think you were eating all those frogs for the cards."

"Hmmm?"

"Because you *got* Agripa, and you didn't even notice. You kept on eating more frogs." Hermione scolded. Holding up a card. Ron stared for a moment, then made a lunge for it. Hermione held it out of reach.

"Come on, give me it!" Ron said desperately.

"Not until you apologize." Hermione said.

"Apologize? For what?"

"For saying that having dentists for parents has..."

"Oh. That." Ron sighed. "Sorry,"

"The train has stopped." Harry said. Hermione leapt up. "Well, lets get going."

Harry and Hermione walked out of the train, followed closely by Ron. Harry grinned slightly as he opened the door to a carriage for Hermione, then got in. Ron scrambled in after him.

"So, Hermione, is Sirius just going to stay at your house this year?" Harry asked.

"I asked him once. He said that he was planning on journeying north for the school year. He wanted to be near Hogwarts."

"Hang on, Hermione." Ron said. "For Sirius to tell you anything, he would have to be in his human form. What if your parents saw him?"

Hermione bit her lip. "He took his human form at night, when they were asleep. I... I took him food at night, because my parents wanted to feed him dog food. I know it was dangerous!" Hermione said when Harry looked horrified. "But it was his decision, and we didn't get caught!"

"I never thought I would see the day you, Hermione, would do something that risky." Ron shook his head. "Well, you didn't get caught, at least. That's something."

"Feeling better, Ron?" Harry asked.

Ron nodded. "I can probably eat some of the feast. Just not the deserts..."

The carriage stopped suddenly. "We're here," Hermione announced.

Eliza Snape waited at the great halls nervously. Her father smiled as he passed on his way to the high table with the other teachers. She could just hear Professor Flitwick now. "You'll have a special introduction from Dumbledore after the first years are sorted," he had said in his high, squeaky voice. He had also assured her that she would be known as 'Eliza Diawna'.

The great hall was a huge, dim room, with hundreds of candles hovering in mid air. The ceiling was strange, with thick, dark clouds hovering over them. Eliza was trying to decide whether or not the room had a roof over her head or not. It was hard to believe there was anything there at all.

Her thoughts were interrupted by a crowd of chattering students entering the room, sitting down at the house tables.

"Eliza!" Draco called, and rushed up to her. "I was looking all over for you! Where were you?"

Eliza smiled. "I live in Hogsmeade, so I don't need to take the train. I just walked up here a few hours ago."

"Have you been sorted yet?" Draco asked. Eliza shook her head.

"Professor Flitwick said that I'd get a special introduction and get sorted right after the first years." Eliza said. "Speaking of which, the sorting is going to start soon."

"Right. I'll see you then. Hope you get in Slytherin." Draco smiled and walked back to the Slytherin table.

Professor McGonagall walked to the stool in front of the high table where the first years were lining up. She carefully placed the sorting hat on it, then took out a long list of names for the sorting.

“Malfoy, Wyrren!” Harry stopped talking to Hermione and looked up. A pale girl with spun gold hair was walking up to the hat gracefully.

“Did McGonagall say ‘Malfoy?’” Ron asked.

“Malfoy,” confirmed Hermione. “She does look like Draco, look at her. Same pointed face, same pale complexion. Her hair has more gold than Draco’s, but other than that, they could almost be twins.”

Wyrren calmly put the sorting hat on her head. Everyone watched with great interest.

“Gryffindor!” the hat shouted. Harry sat stunned for a moment, then clapped with the rest. Wyrren looked very calm and composed as she walked to the Gryffindor table and sat down.

“Well, that was something I didn’t really expect.” Ron said. Wyrren looked like someone who would punch you without changing her expression.

“That’s just probably because she’s from the Malfoy family.” Hermione said.

“True,” Harry said, and went back to watching the sorting.

After Professor McGonagall finished reading the names of the first years, Professor Dumbledore stood up.

“I’m pleased to say that we have a new student...”

“...coming to Hogwarts this year.” Eliza fidgeted. Snape was beaming at her. “I would like everyone to welcome Eliza Diawna, a fifth year at our school.”

Snape stopped smiling. He looked hurt and rejected, then changed to anger. Eliza stood up and walked to the sorting hat, trying to keep from trembling. She never had seen her father angry, she realized. Snape looked like he was going to tear someone’s throat out.

Numbly, she lifted the hat over her head, and let it fall down over her head. At least now she couldn’t see her father.

Well, well. Isn’t this interesting. The sorting hat said in her ear. You have plenty of courage, a love of learning and books, no doubt about that. I haven’t seen someone this tricky in years...

Please don’t put me in Slytherin. Anywhere but Slytherin. Eliza thought. Images of her father sprang up in her head, images of her twin, laughing at her, her mother telling her that she was worthless, friends turning on her. Snake woman, snake girl, the death threats from the people who used to be nice to her. The prophecy... *Anywhere but Slytherin,* Eliza thought again.

Oh? I suppose not... Pity, though, a parselmouth is always welcome there. Well, then I suppose, you belong in...

“Gryffindor!”

Eliza trembled as she walked over to the Gryffindor table. She had done it. She had gotten into Gryffindor. Why wasn't she happy? All the Gryffindors were applauding. She sat down at the table next to a boy with messy black hair.

Harry looked at her. "Welcome to Hogwarts,"

Eliza smiled. "Thanks, Harry."

Hermione looked at Harry with a raised eyebrow. "You know her?"

Harry nodded. "I meet her in Flourish and Blotts, while you were lost in the world of literature."

"Ron, Harry, look, Snape!" Hermione whispered. Harry, Ron, and Eliza swung their heads around to see Snape approaching the Gryffindor table. The Potions master looked ready to kill.

Snape stopped behind Eliza and put his hand on her shoulder, squeezing it painfully hard. "I wish to welcome you to Hogwarts, Miss *Diawna*. I would also like to thank you for not disgracing the family name. Your father wouldn't approve." Snape let go of her and pushed her shoulder into the table, then swaggered past, his black robes billowing behind him maliciously. Most of the people around Eliza were staring at Snape's retreating form, their mouth's half open.

"Um, Eliza? Snape has it in for you, more then he does me." Harry said, then bit his lip as he saw Eliza trembling. "What did Snape mean, about you disgracing the family name?"

"I...I come from a long line of Slytherins, and um... my father was quite intent on me getting into Slytherin." Eliza said. Harry and Ron exchanged 'She's hiding something' looks.

Professor Dumbledore stood up. "Before we begin the feast, I have an announcement. I would like to introduce Professor Talish, your new Defense Against the Dark Arts teacher." Dumbledore gestured to a rather small man sitting on the edge of the high table. If Dumbledore hadn't pointed him out, Harry would never have noticed him. He had dark brown hair, brown eyes, ordinary looking skin, and a rather timid complexion. Dumbledore looked around the room. "Let the feast begin!" he announced.

The golden plates suddenly filled with food. Harry began to fill his food. Even Ron managed thirds on almost everything. The only person who didn't seem to have an appetite was Eliza, who finished about half of her first helping and then picked at the rest of it.

Ron skipped desert, saying he had had enough chocolate to last him a lifetime. Eliza ate more desert then dinner, and said she was quite full when at last all the food disappeared.

Eliza walked to the Gryffindor tower numbly, not really listening when Hermione told all the first years the password and went to bed, her mood as cloudy as the dark clouds that passed as a ceiling in the great hall.

Chapter Five

Told by Hermione Granger

The next day was bright and clear, and it overly looked like a much better day. I sighed and got into my robes, eager for the start of class.

Lavender groaned and pulled the blankets over her head as I opened the windows. "Honestly, Hermione, it's the first day of school. Let us sleep in."

I rolled my eyes. We finally get back to our classes, something I had been looking forward to all year, and they just want to sleep in!

"Fine. I'll eat breakfast without you!" I said, ready to march out the door.

"Wait, Hermione!" Eliza said, sitting up. "I'll come down with you." Eliza pulled herself out of bed and started changing into her robes.

I hesitated, then shrugged. "Fine with me, just hurry up!"

"Fine, fine." Eliza pulled the quickest robe change I've ever seen in my life. She saw my face of astonishment as she was fully dressed within twenty seconds. "I used to like to sleep in a lot," she said sheepishly.

I snapped out of my trance. "Come on!" I grabbed my book bag and headed out the door, Eliza right behind me.

"Ok, I don't know this school very well, so I'm probably going to have to follow you around for a while. Do you like to read?" Eliza asked halfway to the great hall.

It was right then that I thought that Eliza and I could become very good friends. I laughed. "I'm the biggest reader in the school. Top of every class."

"Really? So was I, at my old school. Do you like muggle fantasies?" Eliza asked enthusiastically.

I thought about that. "Not so much anymore. I'm muggle born, so before I found out I was a witch I read them all the time. The Hobbit, Lord of the Rings, Dealing with Dragons, I could go on and on..."

Eliza smiled, said she had read them all, the Hobbit, five times over, and named book after book, some of them I've never even heard of. I was amazed. I had never met anyone who read as much or more than I do.

"Why is the ceiling like that?" Eliza asked as we stepped into the great hall. I looked up, a habit of mine when I want to know the weather.

"It's enchanted," I said. Eliza frowned.

"Why? What kind of enchantment?" She repeated.

I shrugged. "Just a decoration, I guess. There are a few pages about it in Hogwarts, A History. You can get it from the library, if you want." Eliza nodded.

"So, what's for breakfast? Sausage? Hashbrowns? Scrambled eggs, toast, bacon, pancakes?" Eliza asked as we neared the table.

I raised an eyebrow at Eliza. "Fond of breakfast, aren't we?"

Eliza nodded forcefully. "Very. It's important that the pancakes have butter and powdered sugar on them, no syrup. Syrup makes it sticky and ruins the taste of the buttered powder sugar. And the eggs must be scrambled so that they're light and fluffy looking, with equal parts of butter yellow and white mixed in tantalizing disarray. And sausage should be cooked so that there's no doubt that it's cooked to the middle, but still hot and juicy in the inside. Hashbrowns, of course, must be a golden brown, but white and steaming underneath the top crust. These are things I know."

I briefly glared at Eliza. "You're making me hungry." I sat down at the table. Most of the other students were still sleeping in. Eliza sat down across from her.

"I don't think this food is up to your expectations." I said. Eliza shrugged.

"Close enough," she said, and started piling her plate with sausages, muffins, and fruit. "Look, Hermione! I'm happy!" I glanced from my roll to see Eliza hold up two sausage links over her mouth in a happy face position.

I stared for a moment. Then I started laughing.

Eliza and I could definitely become very close friends.

Narrated by Draco Malfoy

Before dawn of the first day of school, I was up, fully dressed. I had been working on a painting I had started sometime after my trip to Diagon Alley, of a pale girl with black curly hair and deep blue eyes striding through a busy road, full of confidence and laughter, her black and dark green robes blown back by the breeze. The overall appearance of the painting so far was cheery, ... filled with sunlight. It seemed to inspire me further as I worked to perfect the girl's features. She was beautiful as the ocean at sunrise.

Goyle stirred in his sleep. I glanced fearfully over at his bed. Goyle didn't know I loved to draw and paint. Almost no one knew about my artwork, with the exception of Wyrren. My drawings were good, precise, but they usually lacked a warmth, an experience. The main problem with the girl in my painting was that her blue eyes lacked the mischievous sparkle and the warm radiance I wanted to show. No one I hung around with had any of those traits.

Goyle sat up and yawned. I quietly put away my painting. It was a magical painting, of course. It wouldn't move until I was satisfied with it though, and at this rate, I may never be. I want to be one of the best painters that ever lived, like the great wizard Monarhe, who was so good at painting personality the character's would mirror those of the physical world, an almost impossible accomplishment. The paint I used was magically enchanted to dry as soon as I wanted it to. My paint wand was one of the most expensive available, due to my father's abounding wealth. He doesn't know what I bought with the money he gave me. Hopefully he never will. The idea of a Malfoy as a common artist would horrify him.

"What time is it?" Goyle asked. I shrugged. "At any rate, we ought to be getting breakfast. I was just going down there."

Goyle thought about this and finally grunted to show that he understood. I sighed and left the room, wishing that Goyle was more of a sound sleeper.

The great hall was uncrowded, with the exception of a few enthusiastic students, Granger the snob among them, I noticed bitterly. She always had to out-do me, always had to prove that she was better than everybody else. I frowned and turned to sit down at the scarcely populated Slytherin table.

"Draco!" I turned. Eliza walked quickly to the Slytherin table. I wondered if I should still talk to the girl after she had disgraced her family by getting into Gryffindor. I immediately thought of Wyrren. Why not?

"Have a seat," I said, offering her the space of the bench next to him. Eliza sat down.

"So, what have you been doing?" She asked as I dished myself up.

"Not a lot. Mostly trying to keep my little sister from killing me with that cursed perfume." I commented.

Eliza laughed. "Surely you must know that the whole purpose in a little sister's life is to annoy us."

I raised an eyebrow at her, a trick I'm rather proud of. "Oh, you have a little sister too?"

Eliza winced and nodded. "Worse. She's my identical twin, meaning she can pass herself off as me at any given moment. Total pain in the neck."

"The evil twin, huh?" I asked.

Eliza smiled. "Oh, yes. You could say that."

I didn't respond. I was just looking at Eliza in wonder.

Her eyes were a blue-gray-green mix. Up close I could see the faintest hint of brown in them. They were smiling eyes, speaking of warm laughter and friendly mischief.

The perfect eyes for my picture.

"Eliza?" I asked.

“Hmm?”

“Do you like to paint?”

Chapter Six

Pansy Parkinson strode into the great hall and looked around. The Slytherin table was packed. Pansy looked for Draco's slightly long silver and golden hair, his gray eyes glancing at the door, waiting for her. Pansy smirked, then sighed with annoyance. Draco had a new girlfriend, the goody two shoes Gryffindor.

Well, we'll just see how long she remains his girlfriend when I'm done with her, Pansy thought, smiling a bit. She could just see it now, the pretty, perfect Eliza Gryffindor, biting her lip as she raised her arm up to her feebly. *We'll see.*

Draco was sitting in the middle of the table, next to Eliza still. The rest of the Slytherins had sat down next to her, not recognizing or caring who she was. She was just another student, after all.

“What's this Draco? Have you been playing in the garbage again.” Pansy grabbed Eliza's arm and swung her around. “I think you should find some other rubbish to play with. One that's not Gryffindor trash.”

Eliza looked at Pansy for a moment, as if appraising her. “If we are to speak of garbage, Pansy, you shouldn't be the one to talk. You've been rotting away for the longest time now, I should think, by the smell of it.”

“Gryffindor?” the second year sitting next to Eliza sneered. All the other students around Eliza were watching the fight with interest, now.

“Shut up, Pansy.” Draco glared at her. “At least I'm not going out with a Hufflepuff cast off like you are.”

“I only turned to him because he was so much better than you.” Pansy crossed her arms and assumed a superior expression. “I wonder how you got into Slytherin at all. I'll bet your father bribed the school to set it up. That's all your father is, in anycase. A suit with big pockets.”

“Shut up, Pansy,” Eliza growled. She stood up, facing her. Pansy looked at her with disdain.

“I'd leave if I were you, Eliza. We'll settle this soon enough.” Pansy motioned to her left. Eliza glanced over. Professor Snape was heading to the Slytherin table, rather quickly, a look of amusement on his face.

Eliza nodded. “Later, then.” And she walked away.

Pansy sat down where Eliza had been sitting, chatting away and pretending to smile sweetly at Draco, who looked like nothing would give him greater pleasure than to wipe the hidden look of triumph from her face.

Wyrren Malfoy looked into the mirror. There was a ghost behind her, barely visible, even in the mirror.

“What do you want, ghost?” Wyrren asked. The woman looked around for the brighter ghost, whoever Wyrren had been addressing. No one had seen her before.

“No, you, with the long hair and the nightdress. Who are you? What’s your name?” the ghost looked at her for the longest time. Wyrren could barely see her. There was no color about her at all, like most of the ghosts, and she looked a little more real than smoke.

The ghost mouthed a word. Apparently she couldn’t speak, either.

Wyrren rolled her eyes. She had no time for such dull ghosts. “I have to go to breakfast. I suppose I’ll see you around, then.” Wyrren grabbed her bags and left for breakfast.

The ghost of the young woman looked after the girl with the golden hair for a moment. She had tried to say her name. She had tried... But no one had ever taken note of her before. She had assumed that she was just invisible.

She tried again.

“Lily,” she said softly.

Wyrren Malfoy held her head high as she left the Gryffindor tower. There were so many ghosts of all different shades of color it was amazing. Several of the more realistic ghosts bowed to her as she passed. Once she even saw a true ghost, wearing a ruffle and walking about aimlessly.

Wyrren walked this way and that, always giving the impression that she knew exactly where she was going, although hopelessly lost. She sighed a bit. No one ever expected first years to find their way around the first day of school, according to Draco.

Wyrren was just going down yet another corridor when a glimmer of light attracted her attention. She backed up a pace, then entered a staircase. Another ghost was waiting there, leaning against the wall.

Wyrren curtsied a bit, just enough not to seem rude. The ghost of the old man looked at her and smiled. “Having a bit of fun, are we? Don’t you need to get to class, little one?” His voice was hardly audible.

Wyrren nodded deeply without changing her expression. Wyrren had almost never changed her expression since arriving at Hogwarts. “I am new to this school. I was not given instruction on reaching my lessons.”

The old man smiled, then pointed down the stairs.

“My thanks.” Wyrren said, and walked down the spiral staircase. Three flights later, Wyrren could hear the chatter of the students at the breakfast table.

Pansy Parkinson and two of her other friends were standing outside of the room, whispering among themselves. A girl with white and yellow hair walked calmly out of the staircase, and walked to the entrance of the great hall with a small smile on her face.

“That’s Draco’s sister,” Pansy whispered.

“Gryffindor scum,” Clara whispered back.

“What do you say we teach Draco a lesson about hanging with the enemy?” Pansy whispered back to them. They grinned and nodded.

“Hey, Dragon girl!” Pansy called out. Wyrren stopped and looked at her. Pansy felt like she was shrinking under the girl’s gaze.

“You were referring to me?” Wyrren asked slowly. Pansy almost bit her lip. This girl was slow to act, and looked totally calm, so totally confident, it was scary.

“What, are you deaf?” Clara sneered. “You’re Draco Malfoy’s little sister, and you got into Gryffindor.”

“I did,”

“Well, we’re here to pay you a lesson about disgracing the family name, Malfoy.” Pansy sneered. Pansy’s other friend Mythicala laughed. It was clear she was enjoying every moment of this.

Wyrren looked at them. “Perhaps. But I think it will be you three who will be learning the true lesson in this case.”

Clara shot a confused glance at Pansy. Wyrren walked toward them.

Mythicala laughed again and raised her wand.

Wyrren stood up to her, face to face, and ran her sharp, claw like fingernails through the skin on Mythicala’s arm. Mythicala looked shocked as all of them bled badly. Pansy and Clara were stunned.

Mythicala had stayed in one position too long. Wyrren grabbed her wand and flung it down the staircase. Then, pausing momentarily to kick Mythicala’s leg, Wyrren turned to face Pansy.

“You’ll regret that, Malfoy.” Said Mythicala, still staring at her bloodied arm. She lunged for Wyrren, tackling her. Wyrren clawed her face and bit her any place she could reach, her shoulder, in this case. Clara came out of her shock to raise her wand. Pansy just stood there, and glanced at the entrance to the great hall, in case someone should come out.

“Mythicala, move.” Clara sneered. Mythicala shrugged and backed off. Immediately Wyrren Jumped up and ran her claws over Mythicala’s face.

“Petrificus Totalus!” Clara yelled. Wyrren’s arms were at once bound to her side, and her legs froze together. Her blue eyes blazed defiance though; just as strong as when she started attacking them.

Mythicala swaggered up and kicked Wyrren. “You think it’s nice in Gryffindor, Malfoy?” she sneered. Clara and Pansy smiled, satisfied.

“Leave her alone.” Draco walked into the hallway. Pansy sneered at him. “Oh, is poor little Draco turning into a Gryffindor? It must be in the family.”

“I said leave her alone.” Draco repeated.

“And what are you going to do about it? Tell on us?” Clara grinned and crossed her arms.

Draco looked uncertain for a moment, then ran back into the great hall.

“He’s gone to rat on us,” Mythicala said angrily.

Pansy shook her head. “I know Draco. He’ll stay out of this. Draco never gets involved in something that doesn’t concern him.” Pansy bent down to Wyrren. “I want you to tell your brother that this is what will happen to his goody two shoes girlfriend if he keeps seeing her. Tell him that.”

Pansy looked back towards the doorway. “Someone’s going to be coming out any time, now.”

Draco walked back out of the doorway. Clara rolled her eyes. “Not anyone who matters, apparently.”

“Step away from her.” Draco ordered.

“Oh, aren’t we special?” Mythicala sneered. Draco drew his wand.

“I said to get away from my little sister.”

“And if we won’t?” Clara asked.

“Then we’ll make you.” Hermione said, walking out of the great hall. With her walked Harry and Ron, both with drawn wands. Draco glanced at Hermione and smiled his thanks. Hermione nodded.

Clara opened her mouth. She was the best at dueling in Slytherin, but Hermione was far better. Mythicala flexed her muscles. Pansy just glared at Draco.

“How convenient the Gryffindors came to your rescue, Draco.” Pansy said, retreating. She motioned for Clara and Mythicala to do the same. They both backed off willingly.

Ron walked over to Wyrren and dispelled the body bind charm. Wyrren had a bloody nose that had gotten all over her face. Ron helped her to her feet.

“Twenty points from Slytherin.” Hermione called out to Pansy. Draco glared at her.

“Well, she deserved it. Get mad at her!” Hermione said, shrugging.

Wyrren took a few deep breaths, ran over to Draco, and hugged him. “Thank you,” she whispered.

Draco pushed her away. “You’re going to get blood on my robes!” he said. Wyrren laughed.

Then, slowly, Wyrren stopped laughing. She had transformed back into a person who could ‘punch you and never change her expression’, as Ron put it. “Thank you for your help.” Wyrren said to them all, and walked stiffly into the great hall.

Harry looked after Wyrren for a moment, then turned to Draco. “Is your sister always like that?”

Draco opened his mouth, then closed it. A hard expression crossed his face. “None of your business, Potter. And I didn’t need your help. I’d rot in Azkaban before I asked *you* of anything.” He seemed to have gained his old swagger back, and marched down the hall.

“Now *that’s* more like the Malfoy I know,” Ron said, crossing his arms. “He had me worried for a while.”

Sirius Black and Reamus Lupin walked through the woods together in silence. Finally, Reamus asked “Are you *sure* you know where you’re going?”

“Trust me,” Sirius answered. “I know where I’m going. I’ve lived here for months.” He shot Lupin a mischievous grin. “Besides, I seem to remember knowing this forest back and forth when we went to school at Hogwarts.”

Reamus smiled. “Hogwarts hasn’t changed a bit, Sirius.” He paused. “Nothing has changed. You’d be surprised. If you just glanced in the halls, it looks like James himself is walking through the corridors.” Reamus sighed. “All those old memories seem bitter, now. All the great times we had, the...”

“Quiet!” whispered Sirius. Reamus fell silent.

Listening hard, Reamus could faintly hear bushes rustling quietly. With a faint ‘pop!’ Sirius turned into a huge, black dog.

After a moment, Sirius had transformed again. “We’re here. That’s Hagrid, roaming the forest. I could smell him. I’d better turn back before I’m caught.”

Reamus sighed and nodded. He looked so tired... “I’ll cover for you,”

Sirius transformed again, and together, they walked towards Hogwarts.

Chapter Seven

Harry Potter returned from the corridor outside of the great hall to the great hall, where Hedwig was sitting on top of his seat with a letter in her beak. He patted her snowy plumage as he unfolded the letter.

“Ron! Hermione!” Harry whispered. “Take a look at this!”

“What is it?” Hermione asked, grabbing the letter. She gasped. “You know how dangerous...”

“He’s coming *here*?” Ron asked.

Harry snatched letter back. “I didn’t say ‘take a look at this’ this instant! I’m not done reading it.”

“Well, hurry up!” Hermione said.

“Hang on a second,” Harry said.

Harry,

A friend of mine and I are going to stay at the shrieking shack for a few months. I reckon that you'll want to see him soon. Try coming over for a visit next Hogsmeade trips. I'll have one of the window boards taken off for a bit.

I'll look forward to seeing you again.

-Reamus Lupin

"Lupin!" Ron gasped. "I haven't seen him for over a year."

"Ron, they're passing out schedules." Hermione said. "And I would like to see him, too. Especially after that last teacher." Hermione shuddered.

Ron shuddered too. "I really hope Professor Talish is better."

"I don't see how anybody could be worse than that last teacher." Harry said. "I was almost wishing Snape or Lockhart were teaching the class again."

Hermione took her schedule and passed them out among the three of them. "Well, we'll find out soon enough. We have him in fifteen minutes."

"Breakfast is over already?" Harry asked, checking his watch. "We'd better get going."

The Defense against the Dark Arts classroom was rather plain. Professor Talish was punctual; looking a little nervous as his first class walked through the door.

Professor Talish cleared his throat when he turned to face the class. "Because of this school's history of changing Defense teacher's every year, I'd like to start out with a small quiz to see how much you know. Don't worry, it's not apart of your grade, but, if you will permit me to say this, your last teacher was far from... remarkable."

Professor Talish smiled mischievously. The class started laughing. Professor Talish started passing out papers.

"Take as long as you like, given that you don't take all day about it." Professor Talish said as soon as he was sure everyone had gotten one. "Begin,"

Hermione at once started scribbling in answers. Harry looked over the test. There were plenty of things he knew there, such as the questions on boggarts, kappas, and werewolves... but there were some he had never even heard of in his life. What on earth was a shade, anyway? Ron looked just as confused over many of the questions. Of course, Hermione's quill never left her page.

Eliza handed in her paper first, followed closely by Hermione. Professor Talish scored them as they came in, charting the questions most frequently missed. He seemed very organized about it, and when everyone had handed in papers, he stood up.

"I would like to say that Miss Granger and Miss Diawna both received full marks. Very well done! Twenty points to Gryffindor."

Eliza smiled broadly. Hermione swung back in her seat and stared at Eliza. Eliza shrugged. "Not bad for the new kid?"

Professor Talish started passing back papers. "I think we'll start on creatures related to ghosts. Who can name them all?"

Hermione and Eliza's hand shot up simultaneously. "Miss Diawna?"

Eliza folded her hands on the desk. "Shades, ghouls, poltergeists, and wraiths."

"Excellent," Professor Talish nodded approvingly. "Ten points to Gryffindor. And which of these are most dangerous to humans?"

Hermione's hand shot up again, followed closely by Eliza.

"Miss Granger?"

"Shades," Hermione said.

"Very good. Another five points." Professor Talish opened his book. "I'd like you all to turn to page fifty seven."

Harry flipped through the pages of his book, where a chapter totally devoted on shades resided. There was one illustration; what looked like an ink smug floated silently on the page. It seemed to whisper ideas to him...

"Shades are a very rare type of ghost. They are totally invisible, and can not make people see them. Only necromancers can see shades, and even then they are barely a wisp of smoke in bright sunlight... Miss Granger?"

Hermione put her hand down. "What are necromancers?"

Eliza raised an eyebrow at her.

Professor Talish looked a bit surprised. "A necromancer is a person capable of necromancy, which is the magic of bringing the dead back to life, which is a form of the dark arts. A necromancer who does not perform necromancy is called a dark messenger, someone who can see and communicate with ghosts and spirits that normal people can't see. A trained dark messenger can communicate with people who aren't ghosts at all, just people who have died. I have heard that someone truly talented as a dark messenger can barely tell the difference between a ghost such as Sir Nicholas, and... say... one of you. I have heard that a necromancer can't walk through a ghost, they're so solid. Of course, that is only a rumor."

"I've never heard of a necromancer..." Hermione said thoughtfully. "And I read a lot..."

Professor Talish smiled. "Not many mentions them today. The last dark messenger died some seven hundred years ago. I believe his name was Jelind Malfoy."

"Malfoy?" Harry repeated.

Professor Talish nodded. "If I may continue?"

Harry nodded.

"What makes a shade so dangerous is that a shade can posses and control people who are not on their guard. If a person resists the infestation, there is no way a shade can take over. But..." Professor Talish paused, to emphasize his next words. "do not sleep near a shade! There is no resistance if a person is sleeping!"

The class suddenly became very quite and thoughtful. Neville was trembling.

"Fortunatly, shades are very rare. The easiest way to become a shade is to turn yourself into one."

"What do you mean by that?" Eliza asked.

"There are pendants, jewelry that, if you are to wear them when you die, you would find yourself a shade. They are illegal, as you can well imagine, but there are many still being sold." Professor Talish said. He paused, then sighed. "For homework, I want you to read the chapter in the book on shades and write a short story with a shade as a main character. You can work on it until the bell. I will collect it on Monday."

Eliza at once whipped out a piece of paper and started writing. Hermione moved her chair to Harry's desk. "Much better then last year's teacher."

"He's almost as good as Lupin... one of the best we've had so far." Ron agreed.

"I'm just worried about the story... I'm not that talented at writing stories... I'm much better at reports..." Hermione said as she starting reading the chapter in the book.

Harry grinned. "You'll do fine, Hermione. I could help you, if you want... although I'm not so good at writing, either..."

"Hermione, what's our next class?" Ron asked.

Hermione paused, thinking. "I'm not sure... hang on." She stopped reading to paw frantically through her book bag for her schedule. "Got it!" she whispered, drawing out her schedule from her book bag.

"Well?" Harry asked. "I'd get mine, but I think I used it as a book mark some place..."

"Defense against the Dark Arts, then after that... Potions."

Told by Pansy Parkinson

Snape's Potions class was held in a cold, gloomy dungeon. I never really liked Potions... Snape was untalented as a teacher. Contrary to the popular belief of the Gryffindors, almost none of the Slytherins like potions. Oh, sure, it's fun to see the daily 'let's see Longbottom howl' escapades, but beyond that, it was dark, cold, and boring.

Snape was in a particularly bad mood today. The way his face was sneering you might have taken him to be another gargoyle that decorated the room, except that the gargoyles have never managed an arrogant sneer. A grotesque sneer, maybe, but no arrogance, and no sarcasm, two of the things Professor Snape can do best.

Eliza Diawna, Harry Potter, Hermione Granger, and Ron Weasley were the last to enter the class. Eliza looked as though the Potions classroom was an execution parlor. Snape was smiling so sweetly at Eliza, I wondered if she wasn't right at that.

This could be quite interesting...

"Nice to see you in this class, Miss Diawna," Professor Snape drew her last name out like an insult. Eliza flinched.

Snape smiled again. "Today we're going to be making a blinding potion. Can anyone tell me some of the ingredients in this potion?"

Hermione's hand shot up. Eliza didn't move.

"Miss Diawna?" Snape asked.

"Monkshood, water-lilies, and dragon's teeth." Eliza said in a dead, flat monotone.

Professor Snape raised his eyebrows. "I see you knew the answer. Why didn't you raise your hand, Miss Diawna?"

"I figured if you were going to call on me, you'd do it, raised hand or no raised hand." Eliza answered. "It seems I'm right."

Snape looked murderous. Harry Potter swallowed nervously. Longbottom looked as though he was going to faint. Even the Slytherins held their breath. I glanced over at Draco. He was biting his lip. Draco NEVER bites his lip.

"Ten points from Gryffindor." Snape snarled. "And I want no cheek from you, Miss Diawna." Snape again drawled her name out like an insult. Eliza didn't flinch this time. "Especially after your performance last night."

Performance last night? What was Snape talking about?

"The instructions for the blinding potion is in your book, page twelve." Snape continued.

I slowly got out my book and turned to page twelve. Draco did the same.

"I see your girlfriend isn't doing too well with Snape," I whispered to Draco.

Draco glared at me. "Lay off, Pansy."

"Lay off, Pansy? Is that all you have to say?" I sneered at him. "I'm hurt. You've wounded me."

Draco didn't answer. He just started chopping some of his water lilies into diamond shaped pieces. I put my ingredients on the same table, so Draco would have to face me while he worked.

I sneered and asked Draco if he wanted to go join the Gryffindors. Draco didn't answer. He just worked in silence for the next twenty minutes.

Mid way through the class, the false peace broke. Snape walked briskly to Eliza's potion, a look of triumph on his face.

"Exactly what is this?" he asked, ladling some of Eliza's potion up. I didn't know what Snape was talking about... it looked fine to me...

"That would be my potion," Eliza said evenly.

"You call that a potion?" Professor Snape sneered. "It's too thick."

Eliza was silent. Harry, Ron, and Hermione drew together, like a team. Draco bit his lip again.

"Can't you do anything right, Eliza? You're worthless! Look at this! This isn't a potion, it's a mess! You're a disgrace to your family! You hear me girl?! Well?!" Snape smiled victoriously.

"I'm not a disgrace to the family... I'm worth a whole lot more than you!" Eliza said.

Hermione, Harry, and Ron exchanged looks of horror.

"Is that how you feel about it, Miss Gryffindor Diawna?! You knew what you were to do when you put on that sorting hat! You went against everything your family has ever taught you! And you still think you're worth something?! Look, you can't even make a simple blinding potion right! And you think you're better than me?!" Snape sneered challengingly.

Eliza started crying. I started smiling.

"Think about it, Miss Diawna." Snape nearly whispered. "I could make life miserable for you. Think about Slyther? Snakes are forbidden at this school, you know..."

Eliza looked terrified for a moment. She stepped in front of her bag, glanced down, and hissed.

A long, dark green snake streamed out her bag, graceful as running water. It disappeared in a crack in the wall.

Harry Potter looked stunned. "A parseltongue!"

Snape turned back to Eliza.

"Stop it!"

I turned. Draco Malfoy was walking towards Snape, looking furious.

"I don't know what your problem is, Professor, but just lay off of Eliza! Pick on someone else!"

The entire class was stunned.

Somewhere off in the distance, the bell ending class rang. The entire group ran to the door.

On my way out, I noticed one very strange thing. It was dark in the dungeon, but I swear I saw something I will never forget.

Snape was crying.

* * *

Harry Potter ate his lunch slowly. "You know, I think I figured out something." he said at last. Ron and Hermione glanced up at him.

"What?" Ron asked.

"Well... we've been looking on Draco as an enemy for over four years now. I... I never really saw him as a person until now." Harry said.

Ron raised an eyebrow. "I still think Draco's a jerk."

Harry sighed. "I'm not saying he's not... I just never knew he had a good side."

Eliza just smiled.

Chapter Eight

"Eliza's hiding something," Harry announced that night as the rest of the Gryffindors headed off for bed.

Hermione looked up from her book. "I agree," said Ron. "Why is Professor Snape picking on her so much? I don't buy that story about Snape being mad at her for having a Slytherin family. If that was true, he'd be bugging that Wyrren Malfoy, too."

Harry sighed. "Maybe we don't want to know. Think about it. There are some things that people just wouldn't understand."

Ron looked around sleepily. "Hey," he whispered. "Speaking of Wyrren, isn't that Draco's little sister? Look by the portrait hole. She's sneaking out!"

Harry turned. A small girl was leaving the Gryffindor tower. Her hair reminded Harry of the sun shining on water, rich and yellow. "That's Wyrren... where is she going? She'll get lost..."

"And she'll lose points for Gryffindor." Hermione frowned. "Harry, you think we should go get her? See where she's going?"

"All of us won't fit under the invisibility cloak..." Harry said slowly. "And Ron... sorry, but you're so tall no one else would be able to come if you went."

Ron scowled. "You and Hermione want to go? Alone?" Ron asked. A wicked, knowing grin spread across his face, then winked at Harry. "Go, by all means."

Hermione blushed.

Harry rolled his eyes. "I'll go get the cloak..."

"And the map!" Hermione said. "We won't know where she is, otherwise."

Harry nodded, and set off for the boy's dormitory. He came back a minute later, looking as if he had lost something. "Let's go."

"Check the map first! There's no light in the halls..." Hermione hissed. "Over there, in the corner, no one will see us..."

Harry unfolded the old map carefully and took out his wand. "I solemnly swear I am up to no good." he whispered.

The lines on the map started appearing. Harry scanned the hallways, the passages, the kitchen...

"There she is," Hermione said. "Library,"

"Why would a first year be sneaking out of the tower at eleven O'clock at night to go to the library...?" Harry asked.

Hermione looked at him.

"I seem to remember you doing the same thing," she pointed out.

"You don't think she's in the restricted section of the library?" Harry asked. "Let's go!"

Harry and Hermione left the portrait door unnoticed.

* * *

Wyrren scowled as she turned the page of the volume she was reading. Nothing. There had to be a book on here that would do... Wyrren scanned the shelves again. Wait... there was one that might do... she glanced over at the restricted section, then shook her head. Those books would have been guarded... there was probably no way she could even touch one...

She took the old book off the shelf. It was titled 'The Art of the Dark Messenger', by Jelind Malfoy. Wyrren smiled as she took the book off the shelf. "Forgive me, great ancestor," she whispered with a twisted smile.

The door creaked open. Wyrren jumped to her feet. The door was open... but no one was there. Wyrren breathed a sigh of relief, then opened her book and started reading the introduction.

She glanced up at the door again and nearly jumped. A foot away were the wispy form of the face of a ghost... she could see little more than what may have been glasses.

"Don't look at me like that!" Wyrren said, crossing her arms. "It gives me the creeps. What are you doing here?"

The ghost vanished into the darkness. "You can see me?" a voice asked from the gloom of the library. Wyrren rolled her eyes.

"If I couldn't see you, I wouldn't be talking to you. Why were you staring at me?" Wyrren asked, clutching her book.

"I... wanted to know what you were doing..." the voice faltered. "How is it that you can see me?"

"I'm special." Wyrren said. "Go away."

"As you wish..."

Wyrren listened for a moment to make sure he was gone, then continued reading. After five minutes of scanning the chapters, she nodded. This would do fine. Maybe that ghost in her room would make some sense after studying this...

Wyrren smiled and left the library, clutching the book.

Next Monday, Professor Talish passed the students papers back. Eliza and Hermione snatched eagerly at theirs. Hermione gasped when she saw her paper. "Harry!"

Harry turned. "What's the matter, Hermione?"

"I... I got an A-! 91%! My worst grade since I came to Hogwarts!" Hermione bit her lip. "This is going to wreck my grade!"

Harry tried to look sympathetic. Ron had to cover his mouth from bursting out laughing.

"Eliza, what did you get?" Hermione asked.

"Umm.... I got a 98%..." Eliza said sheepishly. "I beat you."

Neville gasped from his chair, halfway across the room. Professor Talish smiled. "I would like you all to know that Mr. Longbottom here has gotten the highest grade on this assignment out of all my classes. Very well done, Neville. Fifteen points to Gryffindor."

"Neville got a higher grade than me?!" Hermione looked devastated.

Neville was smiling broadly. "I... I got the highest grade?"

Professor Talish nodded. "Keep up the good work, Neville. That was very interesting. I loved the part about the dementor... you must have worked hard on that..."

Hermione started clapping for Neville. The rest of the class followed. Neville just sat in his seat and glowed with happiness.

Draco Malfoy got up three hours before breakfast the next day. Silently, he packed up his painting, his easel, and his paint wand, and left his dormitory.

Draco and Eliza had planned to meet in an abandoned classroom on the fourth floor. It wasn't the safest place to meet, but it was one of the only empty rooms Eliza could find on her own without getting lost. Eliza wasn't there when Draco walked in. He sighed and started setting up his equipment.

Eliza sneaked in the room when Draco was setting up his easel. "Is that your easel?" she asked.

Draco jumped and spun around. "Don't DO that to me!"

Eliza grinned.

"And no, that's not my easel, that's a turnip."

"It's looks about as edible as a turnip." Eliza said. "So where's your painting? I've been dying to see it..."

Draco brought it out. Eliza caught her breath.

"It's beautiful... I wish I could paint like that..." Eliza seemed to be lost in a dream.

Draco looked at it. "After you tell me what's wrong with it in detail, maybe I'll teach you a little."

Eliza looked at him. "Really?"

Draco nodded.

"Let's get started then."

Eliza and Draco started working, Eliza doing a combination of posing and giving constructive criticism.

And slowly Draco's painting moved into the realms of perfection.

Wyrren reread the passage in the book carefully. It described some of the ways to listen correctly to what a ghost was saying. It had been three weeks since she had stolen the book out of the library, and Wyrren had no intention of returning it anytime soon. During those weeks she had studied it, and it seemed that suddenly all of the ghosts in the castle took more form and color. Everything seemed to make more sense.

She glanced over at her bed. The ghost of the young woman was there again, the one she had seen in her mirror on the first day of school.

"Can you talk now?" Wyrren asked. For some reason, this ghost intrigued her. "Or, more appropriately, can I hear you now?"

The ghost remained silent. She was still just a blurry outline, although a great deal more solid looking than when Wyrren had first seen her. Wyrren frowned.

"Ok... I'm going to try something." She said. "I want you to trace your name on this paper with your finger. Then I'll follow your finger with my quill, ok?"

She nodded, brought her finger to the paper, and started tracing slowly.

-Lily-

"Lily... that's a pretty name. Why are you here?" Wyrren asked.

-to watch him- Lily traced.

Wyrren frowned. "Who is 'him'?"

Lily paused for a long moment. -Forgotten... I have forgotten everything...-

"Everything?" Wyrren asked. "What color is your hair?"

-red-

"Do you remember anyone's name?"

Lily nodded. -Voldemort... I remember his name...-

"Voldemort..." Wyrren whispered. "Did he kill you?"

-Yes... and him... he tried to kill the other one but I wouldn't let him! He killed me and him and... forgotten...-

"There were three people?" Wyrren asked.

-yes... three...-

"And Voldemort didn't succeed in killing one of them?" Wyrren asked.

Lily nodded.

"Is your last name... Potter, by any chance?"

Lily paused. Wyrren had the feeling she was concentrating very hard. Finally, Wyrren heard an audible shriek from the ghost.

-YES! My name is Potter! My name is Lily Potter!"

Chapter Nine

Draco Malfoy sighed in frustration in the empty library, staring at his homework. "I don't get this," he muttered. His grades in Charms had been dropping lately, even to the point where he was worried about them. Professor Flitwick had been teaching the use of simple healing charms, and none of it made any sense. "I don't know how Madam Promphrey does it..."

Pansy Parkinson walked into the library with Crabbe. Draco groaned and brought his textbook in front of his face.

Pansy spotted him anyway. "So, Draco," she said. "You still going out with that Gryffindor?"

"Shut up, Pansy."

"I want to know, too." Crabbe said with a twisted smile on his face.

"Well, why don't you just jump into a well, Crabbe. I'm working." Draco sneered.

"Oh? We're insulted, aren't we, Crabbe? I'm not leaving until you answer me." Pansy said. Crabbe nodded thickly.

"Drop dead," Draco muttered.

"Did you hear that, Crabbe? Draco wants us dead." Pansy smiled. "Hit him, Crabbe."

"What?" Draco asked.

"Wha?" Crabbe grunted.

"Draco wants you dead, Crabbe. He's your enemy. Hit him." Pansy ordered.

Crabbed considered, made a fist, and drew his arm back. "Sorry, Draco,"

Draco threw himself on the floor just before Crabbe swung his big fist at him. Crabbe frowned, wondering where Draco had gone.

"Under the table, Crabbe." Pansy said.

Crabbe frowned and looked under the table. There was Draco. How did he get there?

Draco looked around desperately for his wand. Where had he put it? Where was Madam Pinch, the librarian?

Crabbe tried to punch under the table. It went above Draco's head. He frowned and tried again.

Pansy rolled her eyes. "A lot of good THAT'S going to do you. Get on your knees and punch him."

Crabbe got to his knees. Much better. He and Draco were now face to face.

Draco crawled out from under the table and jumped to his feet. He knew from experience just how hard Crabbe could punch someone...

Crabbe jumped at him. Draco skirted around another table. Where was the librarian?

Crabbe looked confused. Now there was a table in between Draco and himself. He could go around, but Draco was faster than he was. If he went over, Draco could run away. What should he do now? Where was Pansy?

Draco winced. He had suddenly remembered where he had left his wand. Right with his book bag on the table behind Crabbe. Maybe Crabbe

would try to go around the table and he could get his wand. This was just like playing tag around a kitchen table with Wyrren...

Pansy snuck up from behind Draco and threw her arms around his shoulders. "NOW come around the table, Crabbe!"

Crabbe smiled gleefully and drew back his fist.

"Petrificus Totalus!" someone by the door shouted. The voice sounded familiar...

Crabbe froze up and fell to the floor with a crash. Pansy turned, livid.

Draco punched the side of her head. She was knocked to the floor.

Draco opened his mouth to thank his protector.

It was Harry Potter.

Harry looked at him with raised eyebrows. "What was that all about?"

Draco swallowed. Madam Pinch came striding into the room. She took one glance around and put her hands on her hips.

"What happened here?"

"Um... Pansy said something that Crabbe didn't like, and he hit her. Then Potter saw that and put the body bind on Crabbe, so Crabbe wouldn't punch her again. I was trying to break them up." Draco lied. It was the first thing that came to his mind.

Madam Pinch hmphed. "Just as I thought. I'll take them from here. You can go now, Mr. Potter, Mr. Malfoy." she said briskly.

Draco shrugged and began packing up his books. Harry waited.

"Is there some reason you're still here, Potter? I didn't need your help." Draco said.

"True..." Harry said. He looked amused. "But you would have gotten a broken nose at least if I didn't. I thought you would rather be spared the pain and humiliation of being beaten up by your best friend who was taking orders from your ex-girlfriend."

Draco winced. "How much of that did you see?"

"Enough to put two and two together. Crabbe doesn't have the brains to do anything but take orders." Harry said.

Draco opened his mouth, then closed it again. Unfortunately for him, Potter was right on the money. "True..." he muttered. "I guess I owe you, Harry. Mind you, I'm not going to remember this on the quidditch field."

Harry laughed. "Eliza wanted me to tell you to meet her same place, same time tomorrow." Harry said. "I saw you in here, so I thought I'd sent the message on."

"Thanks, Potter." Draco said. "I'll see you in potions."

"Right," Harry nodded and walked swiftly away.

Professor Snape stared at Harry and Draco leaving the library through a gap in the books. He was seething. "This time, my dear Eliza, you have gone too far," he muttered.

Neville Longbottom stared at his potions homework, thoroughly miserable. Hermione had explained it to him twice, but he still didn't get it.

He sighed and grabbed his book bag and homework. There was only one teacher in the school who seemed to make any sense at all. Maybe he could help.

Professor Talish was grading papers when Neville cleared his throat at the door. "What is it, Neville?"

"Um... Professor Talish... I... I need help with my potions homework, and no one makes any sense. Could you explain it for me?"

Professor Talish nodded, smiling. "I'm pretty good at potions. Let's see what you have!"

Neville brought his homework out. Professor Talish looked it over and smiled. "Oh, yes. This is a tricky one. My potions master taught me this little trick to memorize it... let me show you..."

Draco and Eliza stood before Draco's finished painting.

"It's perfect." Eliza said.

"I don't think so..." Draco said, looking for some flaw. Somehow... it didn't look completely perfect...

Eliza sighed. "You're doubting me?"

Draco looked over the painting again. "No... I just think it's not totally perfect..."

Eliza folded her arms. "What if we get someone in here to look at your painting who is sure to report any flaws whatsoever? Someone who isn't a friend, so they won't try to spare your feelings?"

Draco shrugged. "Who do you have in mind?"

"How about Hermione Granger?" Eliza asked.

"You have got to be kidding." Draco said.

"Why not?! She loves pointing out other people's mistakes!" Eliza said.

"Hermione..." Draco made a face. "I don't like Hermione... she doesn't like me... we're great enemies!"

"Can I show it to her if I don't tell her who painted it?" Eliza asked. "I mean, who's a better critic than one of your great enemies?"

Draco crossed his arms. "I'll think about it."

Eliza sighed.

"You know that you're the only friend I have at this school, now, Eliza?"
Draco asked.

Eliza turned. "I did hear something..."

Draco nodded. "Thanks for your help."

"It was fun. I enjoyed it." Eliza smiled.

Draco smiled too.

A week later, Harry Potter was looking over his Charms book when Eliza staggered in the room. She looked awful... she had a huge bruise on her right cheek, and it was clear that her nose had been bleeding. Her hair, which was normally in a bun, had mostly escaped and large clumps of curly brown hair were hanging in her face.

"What happened?" Harry asked. Eliza sat down on the nearest chair, breathing hard.

"I... I fell down the stairs..." Eliza muttered.

Hermione ran over. "Oh boy... it must have been a huge flight... I thought you had gotten in a fight or something..." She shook her head. "There isn't a healing charm for bruises that I know of... and it looks like your nose has stopped bleeding... you'd better go get washed up. You need help, Eliza?"

Eliza shook her head and walked slowly to the stairs to the girl's dormitory.

Hermione sighed once Eliza was completely out of sight. "Harry, you're right, Eliza's hiding something... something big..."

Harry looked at her. "You didn't want to believe me when I told you that a few weeks ago. She's really more of your friend than mine. Why the sudden change of mind?"

Hermione crossed her arms. "She says she fell down a flight of stairs. Tell me, what flight of stairs in Hogwarts makes a bruise like this?" She held up her hand like she was going to slap someone.

Harry paled. "You think someone hit her?"

Hermione nodded. "I'm sure of it. And Eliza doesn't fall down stairs, and then start crying."

"Why would she lie about something like that?" Harry asked.

"Maybe we should find out." Hermione said.

Chapter Ten

Told by Eliza Snape

I flipped idly through the pages of my defense against the dark arts textbook, the night I came up to the common room with the bruise on my cheek. Of course, I had not told Harry or Hermione what really happened... I couldn't, really. I didn't really expect them to buy the story about falling down the stairs, but still, it was worth a shot, I suppose...

I was unbelievably bored and preoccupied that night, so I was just looking from article to article of objects used in the dark arts to keep away from. I thought that reading ahead in my work would stop me from thinking about what had happened tonight. I'm no coward... but there are some things even I will run from without fighting. My weakness is verbal abuse. I can out-duel almost anyone, and woe to he or she who picks a fist fight with me... but I can't take verbal abuse... it was only that that I run from. I use my books as an escape route. As long as I keep reading, I can stop thinking about things...

One picture of a necklace caught my attention. It was plain looking at first, an amazingly green stone with tiny black runes carved on it.

I had seen that necklace before... where?

I closed my eyes. I was little... about five or so... Diawna and I were playing in a house... Severus' house at Hogsmeade? Probably... we had found a fake bottom in a drawer in Mother's jewelry box and had discovered, among other things, a beautiful necklace inside.

Diawna wanted to put it on... I wanted it, too. We fought... the noise brought Father in... he snatched the necklace from us and smiled broadly... no... triumphantly... then he snatched some of the other things out of the jewelry box... he hid them in the wall in the attic... Diawna and I watched because we were planning on stealing it back... Father smiled at us and gave us Cauldron Cakes... told us to play outside...

We left the house... Mother came home. At first, all was still. Then came the shouting... the light of powerful enchantments flared from the windows... Diawna and I were scared... then, it was very quiet...

I snapped out of my trance and looked at the picture of the necklace again. Below the picture were the words 'the shaded pendant'.

I held my breath for a moment, my mind racing. A shaded pendant... an artifact allowing a second life after death. Under any other circumstances, death would have been better... but surely... the prophecy...

I shut the book slowly.

Next Hogsmeade trip, I would steal my mother's necklace.

* * *

Hermione, determined to keep notes on whatever Eliza had been hiding, had brought out a piece of parchment and was writing on it continuously throughout their discussion.

"The first time I saw Eliza was when we went to Diagon Alley. Snape was walking her everywhere. She seemed pretty miserable, but Snape didn't seem to have a grudge against her then." Harry said. "Perhaps she said something bad about Slytherin after I met her in Flourish and Blotts."

"Perhaps..." Hermione said. "So... who do you know has a grudge against her?"

Ron raised his head. "Snape, for one. Pansy Parkinson, as well."

"Crabbe and Goyle have switched their loyalty to Pansy," Harry said.

Ron and Hermione stared. "Since when?" Ron asked.

"Since Pansy told Crabbe to punch Malfoy in the library, and he obeyed her. Draco couldn't stop him." Harry said.

"Oh... right," said Ron, yawning. "My brain has gone to sleep, sorry."

Hermione shook her head. "The problem here is that we don't know Eliza well enough. It looks like the only way we could find out anything is to go up to her and ask, although all we'd probably get is more lies." Hermione sighed. "Does anybody know Eliza better than us?"

Harry sighed. "Malfoy, Hermione. Draco Malfoy,"

* * *

Lily looked pleadingly at Wyrren. "Please?" she asked.

Wyrren rolled her eyes. "Do I look like your private messenger girl. Go tell Potter yourself."

"I told you! I've tried! He doesn't seem to see me!" Lily said. "You've been great... telling me what I've forgotten, but please! You must tell him my message!"

Wyrren sighed. "You promise to teach me your song charms if I do?"

Lily nodded. "You should have no trouble with them."

Wyrren sighed again. "This had better be worth it," she mumbled as she walked out of her room into the common room where Harry Potter and two of his friends were talking. Lily followed. In the past few weeks she had gone remarkably solid. It was hard to believe Wyrren had once had trouble spotting her.

"Harry Potter," Wyrren said as she drew near. Harry swung around to look at her.

"You're Wyrren Malfoy, right?" he asked.

Wyrren rolled her eyes. "As flattered as I am of my name being recognized, I have more pressing business to attend to. A ghost called Lily has been hovering around my room, and she wanted to send you a message."

Harry froze. "Lily? Does she have... long red hair?" His eyes looked shocked and slightly desperate...

Wyrren rolled her eyes impatiently. "Yes, Potter."

Harry frowned. "Why doesn't she just come up and talk to me, then?"

"That's what I asked her. She said you couldn't see her... she's pretty faint at first..." Wyrren said.

Harry thought about this for a moment. A hard expression crossed his face. "What is it?" he asked finally.

"She wanted to tell you that the girl called Eliza could be trusted... and that she has her own reasons for lying to you. She also said to be careful not to let Draco Malfoy hear anything about Padfoot before you want to tell him outright, because he'll be a lot closer to you then ever. That's all." Wyrren said. She shrugged. "Perhaps you'll understand it better than me." And with that, she walked back up the girls' dormitory stairs.

Harry glared at the stairs. "All Malfoys are the same, apparently."

Hermione looked at Harry. "You think she was making it up?" Harry nodded. "She could have been... but remember the library? Wyrren can see things we can't."

Harry thought about this for a moment, then rushed for the stairs on the opposite side of the room. He raced to his dormitory, and grabbed his invisibility cloak.

Wyrren was sitting on her bed. "He didn't believe me, Lily. You could just see it in his face."

Lily sighed in frustration. "I'm sorry... I made you look like an idiot. It never really crossed my mind that he wouldn't believe that you've seen me..."

"Well? What do you want to do now? We could try plaguing him with information only you would know... that could work." Wyrren said.

"No. Harry won't believe you that way." Lily sighed. "Perhaps we need something else to convince him... James, maybe?"

"James Potter?" Wyrren thought about it. "How would that help anything?"

Lily shrugged. "I don't know. He usually spends his time in Harry's dormitory, when he's not following Harry around."

Wyrren thought about this for a moment. "James looks a lot like Harry? Messy black hair, glasses? A little less faint than you?"

Lily nodded. "You've seen him."

"I saw him in the library while I was researching ghosts, right before I found the book on Dark Messengers. He disappeared as soon as I looked at him and asked why he was looking at me." Wyrren thought for a moment. "I'll see if I can talk with him for a bit."

Harry Potter took off his invisibility cloak when he returned to his room. He was almost stunned by what he had seen.

Wyrren was a necromancer...

* * *

Draco Malfoy waited for Eliza at breakfast impatiently, the next day. She hadn't shown up in the art room, as usual, and so far he hadn't seen her. Pansy Parkinson, however, seemed to be in an excellent mood and kept asking him obnoxious questions about his 'Gryffindor friends'.

As if to make the situation worse, Harry Potter approached the table and muttered under his breath that he wanted to speak with him, giving Pansy even more ammunition. Draco considered slapping the smug look off her face, then decided against it. Professor Snape had ceased to be his favorite teacher ever since he had stood up against him when he was bullying Eliza, and slapping Pansy silly would probably get him detention.

Draco stared at his breakfast a few more minutes, then left for the entrance hall. Hermione Granger, Ron Weasley, and Harry Potter were waiting for him.

"What do you want?" Draco sneered. "Where's Eliza?"

"Eliza hasn't come down to breakfast. She asked Lavender to bring her up a piece of toast or something." Hermione said.

"Someone hit Eliza last night." Harry said. "You're her best friend... do you know who? She said she fell down the stairs, but there's a big hand print shaped bruise on her cheek."

Draco stared. "Which cheek? How big is the mark? What's the hand's shape?"

"It was her right cheek..." Ron said slowly, squinting as if he was trying to see something particularly far away. "You'll see it in potions, anyhow."

Draco was pacing. "Her right cheek? That would mean that whoever hit her is left handed... I'll check Pansy... she's in a pretty good mood today."

"Draco?" Harry asked.

"What?" Draco said stiffly.

"Well... have you noticed Eliza hiding anything?" Harry asked. "She won't even tell us why Snape has a grudge against her."

Draco looked around, particularly at Clara and Mythicala, who looked very interested in their conversation. "Not here," he whispered, jerking his head towards Pansy's friends. "Come on,"

Draco walked to a deserted classroom, Harry, Ron, and Hermione following. When they were all inside he shut and locked the door.

"You want to know if Eliza's hiding something? How about this: Diawna isn't Eliza's last name." Draco said.

"What?" Ron said, staring.

"You heard me, Weasley. I asked Eliza what her twin's name was. She said her name was Diawna. I said I thought that was her last name. She got read in the face, and told me that she wasn't going to tell me her real name." Draco said. "Do you know what it is?"

Harry shook his head in confusion. "All I know is that she has a family that is all Slytherins, and they now live in America, and have been for the past five years, at least."

Draco nodded. "I figured that much out myself. I have nothing more to say, then"

Ron and Hermione nodded and left at once, as though they wanted to put as much distance between Draco and themselves as possible. Harry looked at Draco a minute. He seemed to be trying to figure something difficult out; he was lost in thought.

"Malfoy... can I ask you something?" Harry asked. Draco looked at him. "Why do you care about Eliza so much? You've given up your friends, your reputation, your values... why? I'm really curious."

Draco thought about the question for a moment, then turned to face Harry. "You want to know?"

Harry nodded.

Draco sighed. "I have been waiting to meet a girl like Eliza for years. She's a pureblood, she's smart, she's extraordinarily pretty, she's got a great sense of humor... I would kill to have a girlfriend like that. And nothing is going to stand in my way. Not you, not Snape, not Pansy, not Crabbe and Goyle, not my place on the quidditch team. The dark lord himself can not keep me from Eliza. And if someone has hurt her, then I will defend her. I kill anyone who hurts her again. I will do anything I can for Eliza, even if I have to sink to the depths of being interrogated by a mudblood like Granger."

Draco glared at Harry. "Have anything else to add?"

"Well... yes, actually. Have you noticed your little sister speaking with ghosts you can't see?" Harry asked.

Draco rolled his eyes. "Of course. She's being an idiot. She does this act around old houses and graveyards she's not used to, where she'll get really

serious and robot like, and she'll talk to thin air. Then she'll insist she had been speaking with a ghost and I just don't look hard enough. Why?"

"Well... she's said she's been speaking with my Mother." Harry said.

Draco snorted. "You believed her? How stupid can you get?"

Harry shrugged and left the room. Draco watched Harry leave, wondering why Potter would ask such stupid questions.

* * *

Ron, Hermione, and Harry were deep in conversation that night. Mostly about the mystery of Eliza and the Halloween Hogsmeade trip approaching. Ron was holding the marauder's map, waiting until people left the common room so they could use it.

"I want to bring Eliza with us to see Sirius," Hermione said. "I mean, Lily said she was trustworthy."

"We're not even sure whether or not Wyrren even talked with Lily. Draco said she's always pretending to speak with ghosts and having weird personality changes near graveyards. He made out she was faking." Harry said.

"I don't trust two words of anything Malfoy says. Either of them," Ron said stubbornly.

"Well... Sirius did say we could bring someone as long as we knew what we were doing..." Hermione said. "Why don't we just check the map now?"

Harry nodded. Ron handed him the map.

"I solemnly swear I am up to no good," Harry whispered, then traced his finger to the girl's dormitory.

"Oh my..." Ron gasped. Hermione sat there with her mouth hung open.

Harry sighed. "No wonder Snape hates her... she was telling the truth... Snape *was* mad at her for getting into Gryffindor..."

The dot was labeled 'Eliza Snape'...

* * *

Eliza was working at her bed when Hermione walked over to her.
"Eliza?"

"Hmm?"

"What do you know about Sirius Black?"

Chapter Eleven

Eliza straightened at once. "What do I know about Sirius Black?" she echoed stupidly. "You want to know the truth, or do you want to know the popular story?"

"The... the truth?" Hermione asked. "Just tell me everything you know."

Eliza smiled grimly. "I know that Sirius Black was sent to Azkaban without a trial fourteen years ago. Two years ago, during the summer, Black broke out of Azkaban. Almost a year later he was captured at this school, and still he managed to escape again. He was sent to Azkaban on charges of murdering thirteen people with a single curse, of being a spy for Lord Voldemort, and betraying James and Lily Potter."

Hermione looked shocked at mention of the Dark Lord's name. Eliza paid no attention.

"I also know that Sirius Black is innocent of all charges." Eliza finished.

"How... how do you know this?" Hermione asked. "I thought no one but... but a few people..."

"Some of the followers of Voldemort know it. My mother knows it." Eliza said. "It's a long story, and one I'd really rather not tell."

Hermione looked confused, but she nodded and walked downstairs, to tell Harry and Ron what Eliza had just said.

* * *

"You're kidding!" Draco hissed softly after Harry whispered Eliza's last name to him during potions. He shook his head, frustrated. "Of course you aren't. I've been such an idiot... of course... it all fits..."

"She also said her mother was a death eater, pretty much." Hermione said. "What do you know about them?"

"A death eater? Let me think..." Draco thought for a moment. "Her first name didn't happen to be Deloris, would it?"

"Yes... why?" Eliza asked. Harry, Ron, Hermione, and Draco jumped.

"I told you not to sneak up on me, Eliza..." Draco said. "You're very good at that, by the way."

"Why are you talking about my mother?" Eliza asked. She sounded a little panicky.

Harry shook his head. "This isn't a good place to talk. Let's meet in the library after our classes are over."

Eliza gave Harry a funny look. Harry went back to stirring his potion. Draco glared at Harry, Ron, and Hermione, then went back to stirring his potion, all the while watching Eliza.

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"So," Harry said, looking at Ron, Hermione, Draco, and Eliza. "Eliza, first off, we know your last name is Snape."

Eliza sighed heavily. "It wasn't *that* obvious, was it?"

"Why did you lie about your name, Eliza?" Draco asked.

Eliza looked away. "I didn't want people to know I was Snape's daughter," she said. Ron, Harry, and Hermione stared.

"His *daughter*?"

Eliza nodded. "I was teased a lot in my last school. I wasn't very popular there... I wasn't mean, like most of them, and my nasty reputation drove the nice kids away... I'm a parseltongue, as you probably have noticed, and people think that's a dark art. I... I wanted to have a chance at this school, and I wanted to stay as far away as possible from people like my family members... I didn't want to be in Slytherin. No offence, Draco."

"My father wanted me to be in Slytherin... if I took the name Snape there, I'd be famous... but... well... I didn't want to be in that house. And a Snape in Gryffindor is hardly welcome."

"I denounced my last name. I called myself Eliza Diawna. I made my father look like a fool in front of all the other staff members. I... I don't really know Severus... I made that decision based on what people told me about him in Diagon alley. 'Snape is evil' I heard. 'I hate Snape, he's a bully' 'he's the worst teacher in the school.' Harry told me outright that he wouldn't like to meet any family member's of the Snape family. I didn't want to be shunned. I came here to get a head start. I wasn't about to ruin my reputation just for my last name."

Eliza stopped talking.

The back of the library was silent for a while. Then, Harry looked up at Eliza. She looked lonely.

"Eliza? Can I ask you something?" Harry asked. Eliza nodded. "Do... do you think you could tell me why Sna- why your father hates me so much?"

Eliza looked up at him. "Long story. You have your homework done?"

They all nodded, even though Eliza knew that Ron had divination homework left. She decided not to bring this up, and Eliza started speaking. She was gifted at storytelling, and soon Harry and the others didn't seem to be in the library at all... they were drifting away into the story of Eliza...

Severus Snape looked around nervously around in the Hogwarts express. There were hundreds of other children there, some with owls or cats... all he had gotten was a toad... Severus looked from compartment to compartment, looking for a place to sit, preferably with another first year.

"Hey!"

Severus turned. A kid with black, messy hair and glasses was waving at him. "You want to sit here?" he asked, smiling.

Severus looked uneasily at the boy. Beside him was another boy with brown hair. He looked like he hadn't gotten enough sleep. They were both first years. Severus nodded on impulse and sat down on the opposite side of the table as the other two. "So... what's your names?"

"I'm James Potter," said the boy with glasses. "This is Reamus," he said jerking his head at the tired looking boy.

"I'm Severus Snape," Severus said. "You have any brothers or sisters?"

"I don't." said James. "Wish I had a brother or something though. How 'bout you, Reamus?"

Reamus was apparently more tired then he looked. He shook his head.

James sighed. "So, Severus, you like Quidditch?"

Severus smiled grimly. "I like to watch it. I can't play worth beans though. Can you?"

James nodded. "I can fly pretty well. I want to be on the house team when I get old enough. I wish they didn't have that rule about first years not being allowed broomsticks."

Severus said nothing.

"Can I sit here?" a soft voice called from the compartment door. Standing there was a very pretty girl with bright red hair and green eyes. Severus thought she was the prettiest girl he had ever seen in his life.

"Sure," Severus said, moving towards the window. The girl sat down next to him. "What's your name?" he asked.

"Lily," she said nervously. "I'm Lily Clark. There's another boy behind me... he was helping me with my trunk. He's a first year too, you think he could sit here as well?"

James shrugged. "Sure."

Lily stood up again to help the next boy with her trunk. "Thanks..." She smiled at him. Severus turned to take a good look at the kid. He had blackish-brown hair and dark eyes. "You can sit with us," Lily said, sitting back down by Severus.

"So, what's your name?" Reamus said suddenly.

The newcomer smiled nervously. "I'm Sirius," he said. "Think anyone else will come?"

"I don't think so... it's pretty crowded as it is," Severus said. "So, what house do you think you guys will be in?"

"Well... either Ravenclaw or Gryffindor," James said. "Those are the houses my parents were in,"

"I don't know..." Sirius said. "My father was in Hufflepuff, and my mom's a muggle," Severus worked hard to keep his lip from curling at the half-blood.

Reamus sat up a bit. "Hopefully Gryffindor," he said. "My whole family's in Gryffindor so far."

"I know I'll be in Slytherin," said Severus. "Both my Mother and my Father were in Slytherin. Pretty much everyone in my family is in Slytherin."

James and Reamus were looking a bit uneasy. Lily shrugged.

"Both of my parents are muggles. Perhaps we all get in the same house!" she said, tossing her red hair.

Severus groaned. "My parents would kill me," he said, keeping himself from sneering at Lily's heritage. Lily was too pretty to sneer at.

The train started moving. James, Reamus, and Sirius seemed to get along with each other very well. Severus mostly stayed silent.

Hours later the train stopped. They all got off, Severus trying to walk with Lily. A huge, booming voice rang out, calling the first years. They were led to a fleet of boats at the edge of a lake that showed a spectacular view of the castle. James, Lily, and Sirius took one boat, along with a rather chubby boy. Reamus and Severus got into another one, followed by the giant that led them here.

"So, didn't you get enough sleep or something?" Severus asked Reamus.

"What?" he said. "Oh... I was just sick a few days ago... I've been pretty tired for a while now..." Reamus looked like he was about to collapse.

"Well, just don't breath on me, then!" Severus said, leaning back a bit.

Reamus laughed as if Severus had made a joke. A rather feeble laugh, but a laugh, just the same. Severus rolled his eyes, as he wasn't joking.

They reached the front of the huge, towering castle without incident. A very young, but stern looking witch with her dark hair tied into a bun arrived and after telling them to tidy themselves up a bit, led them into a huge hall, where a ragged hat rested on a stool. The hat started singing, which Severus thought rather annoying. He didn't pay much attention to the sorting, and only watched when someone he knew was called.

Sirius Black, Lily Clark, and Reamus Lupin went first, and were all sorted into Gryffindor.

"Well," James said as Pettigrew, Peter was called. "I hope you get into Slytherin."

Severus shrugged. "You'll probably be in Gryffindor, by the look of it."

James nodded, and strode up to the hat, when it was finally done with Peter. Like the others, he was put into Gryffindor.

"Oh, look! It's Snape," said a girl next to Severus. He whirled around and saw Jaklin, a neighbor of his that annoyed him greatly. "I saw you siting by

those kids.” Jaklin broke into a wide smile. “All Gryffindors. Dear, dear me... I always thought you’d be the type to stay away from riff raff like them.”

Severus fingered his new wand, thinking of all the curses he’d learned over the summer, and imagining the effects of each one on her pasty face.

“Snape, Severus!”

Severus walked over to the hat, and calmly put it over his head. It had hardly been there two seconds before the hat screamed that he was a Slytherin. Severus was sure to have Jaklin see him smirking at her as he walked over to James.

“I’m going to have fun beating you for the house cup,” he whispered.

“You wish,” James said. Severus shrugged and walked to the Slytherin table, grinning. He’d show them a thing or two...

Eliza looked up. “It’s getting late... we’d better go...”

Draco didn’t seem to realize he was sitting beside his greatest school enemies. “Just a bit more... please, Eliza?”

Eliza shook her head. “We’re going to Hogsmeade tomorrow, then the Halloween feast. I’ll continue after the feast. It’s almost ten o’clock.”

Harry looked around, astonished that it could have gotten so dark without him noticing. “We’ll be here right after the feast, got it?”

Draco, Eliza, Hermione, and Ron nodded, and they all left the library.

Chapter Twelve

Sirius Black was woken up a bit earlier than he wanted to by a tapping on the upstairs window. He glanced at it, then got up at once as he recognized the owl.

Sirius,

I’m bringing along another friend today for our visit. I also think that Hermione, Ron, and Harry have found a friend they want you to meet. I’ll be over shortly after noon. Say hi to Reamus and Buckbeak for me.

-Albus Dumbledore

Sirius smiled a bit. Dumbledore had been bringing teachers over every weekend since he had arrived at the Shrieking Shack. Last week Professor McGonagall had gotten the scare of her life. Sirius smiled slightly. The look on

her face... then there was professor Flitwick, who had looked from Sirius to Dumbledore, and promptly fainted.

Wonder who Dumbledore is going to bring this time? Sirius wondered. Most of the main teachers, the heads of the houses, had all seen him. Some of the only people to remain were some of the elective teachers, the teacher for Divination, care of magical creatures, astrology, the arithmancy teacher...

Care of magical creatures?

Dumbledore couldn't be bringing... *Hagrid*... could he?

* * *

Eliza, Ron, Harry, and Hermione panted as they climbed the hill towards the shrieking shack. "So, exactly who are we going to see?" Eliza asked again. No one bothered to answer her. Eliza had been asking that question all night.

"Not much farther now..." Ron muttered.

"Wait," Harry whispered to Ron and Hermione, looking around the hill. "Remember what Wyrren said? Malfoy will be closer to us then ever... I don't want him to see Sirius, and if he's following us..."

Hermione nodded and started looking around the hill. Ron followed her.

"What are you doing?" Eliza asked. "Please, will you tell me what's going on... I hate suspense..."

"All clear!" Ron shouted. Harry nodded and started walking into the yard of the shrieking shack.

"What are you doing?" Eliza asked, walking after Harry. "That's the most haunted house in England!"

Harry knocked on one of the boarded up windows. Half a minute later, the boards flew off. Harry grinned and started climbing through. Eliza hesitated, then followed suite.

The inside of the shrieking shack was dark and gloomy; Eliza blinked from the dust, then noticed a man sitting by the window. He looked exhausted, and although he looked very young his hair was intermingled with gray. He smiled as Eliza looked at him.

"Is this your friend, Harry?" he asked, smiling a bit. Harry nodded.

"Eliza, this is our old teacher, Reamus Lupin." Harry said.

Eliza looked startled. "Reamus Lupin? James Potter's friend?"

Lupin nodded. "And you would be...?"

"Eliza, sir. Eliza Snape," Eliza said, biting her lip.

Ron and Hermione scrambled through the window. "Professor Lupin!" Hermione squealed, a huge grin on her face. Ron smiled, too.

"Dumbledore should be here soon," Lupin said. "He said he was bringing a friend along with."

“Where’s Sirius?” Harry asked.

Eliza choked. “Sirius?! Sirius Black?!”

“Upstairs, Harry. He’ll be down soon enough.” Reamus said. As if on que, Sirius Black walked downstairs, the old planks creaking beneath his weight.

Eliza jumped up and backed up against the wall.

Sirius looked at her. “You alright?”

Eliza looked terrified. “I’m fine,” she muttered.

“Um, Sirius, what are you doing here?” Harry asked, sitting on one of the nearly demolished couches. It had large chunks torn out of it. Somehow, this didn’t help Eliza’s peace of mind much.

Sirius smiled grimly. “You want to set her straight, first?” he asked, pointing to Eliza.

“Eliza knows everything. She always has.” Harry said. “What are you doing here?”

Sirius sat down on the bottom of the steps. “Well, as you might have noticed, Voldemort’s back,” he started sourly. As if Harry hadn’t noticed... it was his blood that brought him back in the first place... “and Dumbledore has got every witch and wizard he trusts in the country on his side, giving information, trying to gather allies before we get scattered, and so on. Reamus and I are here in case of an emergency. Dumbledore has been taking a teacher every week to see us, so all the teachers in Hogwarts aren’t trying to kill us.” He looked at Eliza. “Perhaps we should be bringing more students here, as well.”

Just then there was a knock on the trapdoor in the middle of the room. Reamus straightened, then crossed the room to open it. Dumbledore, wearing a thin smile, came out, followed closely by Hagrid.

Harry swallowed. Sirius had moved out of site, behind the trap door. But if Hagrid were to turn around... Hagrid still thought Sirius was a murderer...

“Harry?” Hagrid asked, mystified. “Wha’re ya doin’ here?” he swung around to see Hermione, Ron, Eliza, Reamus, and... Sirius.

Sirius had turned himself into a dog.

Eliza blinked.

Dumbledore smiled. “Reamus, if you could go upstairs, I believe that Hagrid would like to see a certain hippogriff...”

Reamus disappeared up the stairs. Hagrid looked dumbstruck. “Beaky?” he whispered hopefully.

Reamus came back downstairs, leading something enormous. Hagrid leapt to his feet. “Beaky!”

Buckbeak squawked and nearly threw himself at Hagrid. Harry smiled as Hagrid, overjoyed, started crying. “How?” he gasped. “How?!”

“I think that is something you must ask Harry, here.” Dumbledore said, wearing an amused smile, his blue eyes twinkling.

Hagrid turned his massive head to look at Harry. "You? Yeh did this?"

Harry squirmed a bit. "We did this. Hermione, Ron, Sirius, and I,"

Hagrid's look of glee was replaced by a look of confusion. "Sirius?" he asked uncertainly. Harry pointed across the room slowly.

Hagrid followed Harry's finger to the dark corner where Sirius, back in his human form, stood. He stared. Dumbledore's grip on his arms became a bit firmer as Hagrid attempted to stand.

"I would think that you would listen to their story first, Hagrid," Dumbledore said, still smiling. Hagrid stared at Sirius in horror, then sat back down slowly.

Harry started telling the story of what had happened the night Buckbeak was to have been executed over a year ago, then let Hermione, Ron, Lupin, and finally, Sirius have their turn to talk. Eliza, hidden in the corner, looked at Harry, Ron, Hermione, Lupin, and Sirius with new respect. Harry knew, from experience, somehow, Eliza and Hagrid didn't get along very well together. Eliza thought Hagrid was a fool. Hagrid never seemed to like her in the first place, even though she was the best in the class.

When Harry finished the story, of how they had gotten Sirius on Buckbeak to escape from the dementor's kiss, Hagrid was looking like he was in shock.

"I din't know... I din't know..." he muttered, running his hand threw his hair distractedly. He looked up at Dumbledore. "Ow many people know this?" he asked.

"Most of the teachers at the school, Hagrid. Professor McGonagall, Professor Snape, Professor Flitwick, Professor Sinistra, Professor Sprout, that new teacher... Professor Talish..." Sirius said. "Then of course, Harry, Ron, Hermione, Eliza, Reamus... not that many, actually."

"The death eaters should know." Eliza said. Everyone turned to look at her. Eliza winced. "My... my mother told me what really happened... she was a death eater. Her name was Deloris... she was Voldemort's pet... he rose her above all his other followers, pretty much. My father... Severus... he used to be a death eater... he never got a very high position, not nearly as high as Deloris was raised... he left and turned a spy against Voldemort months before Voldemort met his downfall..." Eliza glanced at Harry. "Deloris told me all about what had really happen with Sirius Black and Peter Pettigrew. She seemed to think it was clever, a clever deception. Funny how someone got sent to Azkaban wrongly..." Eliza's eyes darkened and her mouth twitched into a sneer. For a moment, Harry wondered how on earth he had missed that Eliza and Snape were related... "It's a long story, but by now, all the death eaters know what really happened. Peter Pettigrew has been shown to them all as the one who raised Voldemort. Deloris was one of the death eaters in the crowd.

She came home crowing that Voldemort had returned to Diawna, my twin. They both were so very excited." Eliza quivered with anger.

"You... you're Snape's daughter?" Sirius stared at her.

Eliza nodded once. "Not that I'm found of my family history. I need to get going... I have things to do in town."

Eliza got up very carefully, walked to the window, and left the house.

Sirius stared at her. "Poor girl... now that I think about it, I've heard of her... I knew her mother. She was two years older than us, but she was known for being exceptionally snobby, beautiful, smart, and mean. I believe she was head girl, as well."

Harry looked after the window, only half listening to Lupin's next words. "I remember her as well... her name was Deloris Amay Riddle, before she changed it... I don't remember her new name..."

* * *

Told by Eliza Snape

I ran through the town to Staff Street. I had exactly two hours to steal the shaded pendant, then be back at Hogwarts. Besides, I was in a panic. Reamus Lupin had remembered her Mother's name, before it was changed. Having the school knowing I was Snape's daughter was bad enough... but if word got out about my mother... I shuddered.

Panting, I stopped in front of Severus' house. No turning back now...

I ran into the house. The lock clicked open as soon as I turned the handle. I was a Snape... it was a family doorknob... I looked around wildly once I had gotten inside, and stared around. Everything looked so different... where was the attic?

I smiled suddenly. Now I remembered... this was my house, after all... I disappeared up a flight of stairs that had been covered up by an illusionary wall.

The attic was dusty and dirty. I stopped by the wall. I remembered staring up at this wall... it seemed so much smaller now...

Bingo.

I reached through the wall and pulled out a chest. Jewelry jingled in it. I took a deep breath, and pulled out the dark green stone.

The shaded pendent gleamed brightly. I took another deep breath, and slipped the necklace over her head.

The world started swimming. I gasped and fell to the floor. When I came to my senses, I at once put her hand over the pendant on her neck.

It was there, but vibrating slightly. It seemed to be a part of my neck. I tried to pull it a bit. It wouldn't move. I tried to take it off. I couldn't.

The shaded pendant wouldn't come off...

"What have I done?" I whispered. "Oh no, what have I done?!"

Chapter Thirteen

Harry, Ron, Hermione, Eliza and Draco met in the library right after the Halloween feast, which they had rushed through in top speed.

"Back to the story..." Ron said. "Go on..."

"Right..." Eliza muttered distractedly. Harry had noticed she had looked slightly panicked ever since she had come back from Hogsmeade. "Um... where did I leave off?"

"Right after Severus told James how much fun it would be at beating him at the house cup." Draco said promptly.

Eliza smiled weakly, then continued on with her story.

Severus Snape woke early the next morning, then promptly started studying his curses again. He would show that stuck up James Potter a thing or two... but what he really needed was someone for target practice. Severus grinned slightly as the wonderful image of James Potter wobbling around the great hall with jelly legs.

Snape sat up after a minute, shut the book with a snap, grabbed his bag and his wand, and headed out through the dungeons to the great hall. When he arrived at the breakfast tables, he saw in disappointment that James must be a sound sleeper. Oh well, he'd wait for him in the halls. Severus was barely two corridors down when he was knocked over.

Severus scrambled to his feet. A fat boy had run him over, tripped, and was now cowering by the wall. A Slytherin second year girl giggled nearby. "Clumsy fool!" he muttered. Then Severus, struck by a sudden, new inspiration, pulled out his wand, and a silver jet of light shot out the end of it. The fat boy whimpered, clutching his head.

"Snape!" Severus turned to see three boys striding towards him. James Potter was standing in the center of them, flanked on either side by Reamus and Sirius. All had their wands drawn.

Severus smiled slightly. "What do you want, Potter?" he called down the halls.

"Get lost, Snape." James snapped. "Before I try out one of *my* curses."

Severus smiled slightly. "You haven't had your first lesson yet, Potter, what would you know?"

James' eyes flashed. He held out his want and shot burning sparks at Severus' face. Severus covered his eyes hastily as the sparks burned his skin.

Sirius strode forward and pushed Severus back as hard as he could. Severus fell back several paces, then tripped over his robes and fell ungainly down a small flight of stairs.

The second year girl laughed and walked away, shaking her head. Snape watched as James helped the fat kid to his feet. "You alright, Peter?"

Severus glared at the trio for a moment, then strode toward the great hall, swearing that he would get James Potter back if it was the last thing he did...

Unfortunately for Severus, his first class after breakfast was double transfiguration with the Gryffindors. The second year girl who had seen Sirius push him down the stairs had spread the news, and he walked into the room, which was alive with giggles from both the Slytherins and the Gryffindors.

Severus took his seat at the back of the room next to Ryan, a boy from his dormitory, with dirty blonde hair and arrogant blue eyes. Jaklin sat right in front of Severus, smirking at him. The transfiguration teacher, a girl who looked like she was only just out of school herself, walked over to the black board and wrote her name in neat letters, 'Professor McGonagall'. She was rather pretty, but stern and serious looking just the same. Her dark brown hair was put back in a bun, and her dark brown eyes looked nervous.

She started passing out tiny pieces of hay around, then started writing notes on the blackboard. Sirius and James suddenly looked very serious, and started copying the notes. Severus stared at them in confusion, but copied them down anyway.

Professor McGonagall told them to set to work on turning their straw into needles. Lily bit her lip as she over looked the notes and concentrated on her bit of hay. James started discussing something with Sirius, pointing out something on the notes and pointing to the hay. Then, looking like he wasn't even trying, James swung his wand around to transfigure his hay.

It worked. The hay had been transformed, almost perfectly, into a rather floppy needle. Professor McGonagall smiled broadly and opened her mouth excitedly. "Well done, Mr. Potter!" she said, showing the rest of the class James' needle. Sirius gritted his teeth and tried with all his might to make his hay change. Nothing happened.

By the end of the class, only Lily and Sirius had made any progress, although Sirius' piece of work looked like a piece of hay with a thread hole in it. Lily had done better, making it gleam silver. Peter, the boy Severus had cursed earlier that morning set his piece of hay on fire. None of the Slytherins had done anything except frustrate themselves into confusion.

By the end of the class, Gryffindor had been awarded twenty points, and five had been taken from Slytherin because Severus had been trying to curse James under the table. Unfortunately, Professor McGonagall had been standing

behind Severus as he lowered his wand under the table and took aim. McGonagall had jerked Severus' wrist so that the curse flew up in a jet of white light, ricocheted along the ceiling, and came back to hit Severus in the head. The entire class roared with laughter. Severus rocked backwards as the classroom swirled around his eyes blearily. Professor McGonagall, her mouth a thin, straight line, took out her wand and set his vision right, letting him see the look on James, Reamus, and Sirius' faces as five points were taken. Even the Slytherins were laughing at him. Severus closed his eyes and wished that he could just vanish on the spot...

Three weeks later, Severus was walking up the staircase from the dungeons when he noticed a large group of Gryffindor first years being ushered down the stairs by Madam Hooch. He poked Ryan.

"What're they doing?" he whispered.

Ryan glanced over and shrugged. "Broomstick lessons, dummy, where have you been?"

"Potter's getting broomstick lessons?" Severus grinned. "He was boasting about how good at quidditch he was half the way here on the Hogwarts express."

Ryan shrugged, and turned to leave. Severus grabbed his arm.

"What?"

"Next lesson is History of Magic, right?" Severus asked. "Professor Binns is more dead then alive, last time we checked. And it's not as if he ever calls roll."

"You want to skip History of Magic? What for?" Ryan asked.

"I just want to see if Potter's as good on a broomstick as he boasts about." Severus snapped. "You coming?"

Ryan shrugged and started walking away. "You're out to get Potter. Don't include me in your stupid plans for revenge."

"Don't include me in your stupid plans for revenge." Severus repeated under his breath mockingly. "Fine. You go right up ahead and be a good boy in History of Magic class." Checking that no one was looking, he sneaked out of the entrance hall and down into the grounds, hiding in the bushes. Potter and the rest of the Gryffindors, including that little fat kid were lining up with their broomsticks in front of them. Severus noticed, despite himself, that Lily's red hair looked especially pretty in the sunlight.

Severus sneaked closer, within hearing distance. James was grinning at Reamus and Sirius, whispering something under his breath. All three looked rather smug.

"Now, I want you all to fly close to the ground fifteen feet, when I blow my whistle." Madam Hooch was saying. "Ready?"

The fat kid next to Reamus didn't look at all ready. He was biting his lip and holding onto his broom with a death grip. James just looked smugly confident.

Madam Hooch blew her whistle. James mounted his broom and flew the fifteen feet before the other students had placed their handholds. The fat boy, what was his name? Peter, had accidentally flown backwards, almost into a tree that flailed its huge branches threateningly.

"Careful!" Madam Hooch shouted. "Don't mess with the whomping willow! Peter! Come here... Oh dear... perhaps we should move away from that tree... I'm not used to it being here, it just got planted this year..."

Madam Hooch moved the group away from the castle. Severus winced. There was no shrubbery there... he couldn't hear what was being said. Potter raised his hand. Lily looked pretty nervous, he noticed. Madam Hooch shrugged. Potter mounted his broom.

Potter rose sharply and flew towards the castle. Madam Hooch looked impressed. Potter could fly well... better than Severus had ever managed. Snarling, Severus picked up a stone. Potter was coming closer...

"Hey Potter!" Severus yelled. "Catch!" and he hurled the stone towards James' face.

James barely saw the stone coming. He tried to dodge, and reached one of his arms out to grab it at the same time.

He caught it.

Severus stood stunned for a moment. James glared at him and threw the rock as hard as he could toward Snape. Severus had to dive to dodge it.

"How do you like it, Snape?!" James yelled. Severus glared at him, and James flew back towards the group. Severus, checking quickly that no one was watching him, ran back inside the castle.

Eliza yawned. "I don't know how you four tricked me into telling this. I'm tired..."

Draco made puppy eyes at her. Harry was looking disappointed. Hermione made little whimpering sounds.

"Please? Just a bit more, Eliza?" Ron asked.

"No... tomorrow's Sunday... I'll tell you then, ok?" Eliza said. Draco suddenly noticed she was seriously starting to drop her American accent. "It's rather late, now."

Eliza smiled slightly, and walked out of the library. Draco, Hermione, Harry, and Ron sat in their chairs a while longer, as if Eliza would come back and keep telling her story.

"So, what do you think will happen next?" Hermione asked.

"I don't know, but Snape having a crush on my mom is just scary..." Harry said.

"Maybe that's why Snape doesn't like you..." Draco mused. "It's about Lily as much as James..." Draco looked up suddenly, as if he'd just realized who he was talking to, and left the library in a hurry.

Harry, Hermione, and Ron got up to leave. "You know, something funny," Ron said as they were leaving the library. "Malfoy has been acting... well... human... ever since Eliza came here."

Harry grinned a bit. "Well, whatever Eliza's done to him, I'm all for it."

Hermione glanced back at Draco, walking alone to his dormitory. Something is different about Draco... what?

* * *

Wyrren sat, seemingly alone in her room. Lily sat on one side of her, a new figure on the other, with messy black hair.

"James Potter," Wyrren whispered. The ghost looked up at her.

"You're a necromancer, little Malfoy," he said.

"I'm not... I'm just good at spotting ghosts." Wyrren said.

James Potter smiled. "As you wish, Wyrren. You seem to be my only link to the living world, so I will try to stay on good terms with you."

"Lily's been teaching me her song charms. What do you have to offer me in exchange for my services?"

James Potter paused. "I could teach you the animagus charm."

Wyrren blinked. The animagus charm... what better teacher than one that no one could see?

"Agreed." Wyrren said. "What would you have me do, oh great animagus James Potter?"

James smiled a bit. "Tell Harry I'm going on a little trip. Having communication to the living changes everything... what better spy than one who can't be killed?"

Wyrren smiled. "My father would throw a fit. Where do we start?"

Chapter Fourteen

Slyther wandered the halls for a bit, occasionally going inside the walls. There were people all around, talking in their strange, human tongue. Of course, what people said were one thing, what people did were another. Slyther could see people's emotions as if they were screaming how they felt. It wasn't hard to do...

Slyther paused. He could hear voices, human, of course, but they were loud and angry. Slyther slid into a crack in the wall and came out the other side.

A girl was standing there. She was angry, unbelievably angry, jealous, and spiteful. The words she spoke were enraged.

The boy to whom she spoke to had once been calm and thoughtful not long ago, but now he was starting to become enraged. Anger... at the girl, at himself, just anger... something the girl had said was enraging him.

The boy stormed out of the room. The girl stood there, now smug and even angrier. All around, the people were angry, angry and confused. The room seemed to radiate of it.

How sad... Slyther thought as he left the room full of the angry, hurt children.

* * *

Draco stormed out of his common room up the stairs and into one of the halls. "One more word from Pansy, one more word..." he muttered picturing Pansy under a number of different curses. The effect cheered him up slightly.

"And so, I was reading in this book, that necromancers have to learn to be able to see and hear ghosts, and that..." Hermione's voice rang out through the hallways. Draco winced. Granger, the mudblood know-it-all just had to be coming down this particular hall. Beside her were Weasley, the muggle lover, and the great, famous Potter.

Hermione stopped talking as she got closer to Draco. Ron and Harry looked at each other.

"Nice sweater, Weasley. It's so... so... so... fitting." Draco sneered. Ron glanced down at his too-small maroon sweater, which was featuring several stains and holes.

"Shut up, Malfoy." Potter growled.

"Shut up, Malfoy?" Draco laughed. "Is that the best you can do? You have less brains than Longbottom, and that's saying something."

Granger looked furious. Weasley looked as if he was about to go for his wand.

"Granger, why don't you do us all a favor and bury your head? It's hurting me just to look at it. The dirt covering your features would be such an improvement." Draco continued, and grinned again, and looked at Ron, Harry, and Hermione.

Eliza was standing at the end of the hall, just within hearing distance. She looked hurt and shocked, and she was crying quietly, as if Draco had been insulting her, personally.

Draco was shocked. “Eliza!”

Eliza turned and ran down the hall. Ignoring Ron, Hermione, and Harry, Draco sprinted after her. “Eliza! Wait!”

Eliza wasn’t running fast. He reached her before she had gotten to the stairs. “Eliza... please...”

Eliza turned. She was shaking slightly. “You...” she paused for a moment. “You have said all you need to say, Draco.”

Eliza ran up the stairs. Draco didn’t follow her. He felt defeated, as though he’d thrown away the only thing that was important to him. His eyes started watering as she ran out of sight.

Ignoring the stares of Harry, Ron, and Hermione, Draco slumped and walked past them, not seeing them... all he could see was Eliza...

“Did you see that?” Harry asked.

“I saw it, but I don’t know if I believe it,” Ron answered. “Was that Draco Malfoy? The Draco Malfoy?”

“I had no idea Eliza meant that much to him...” Hermione whispered.

Draco didn’t hear them... he just kept walking and walking... maybe, if he walked far enough, the pain would go away...

* * *

Eliza sat alone and in silence at the back table in the common room, working on her homework. Hermione approached her hesitantly. Eliza glanced up at her. Her eyes were red and her voice was croaky, as if she had trouble getting the words out.

“Go, Hermione... I don’t want your pity, and I don’t want your comfort. You have nothing to offer me... just... just go...”

Hermione looked at Eliza for a moment, then walked back over to the other side of the room, near the fire.

Eliza stared at her text book, not really seeing the words... all she could see was Draco... his gray eyes and his silver blonde hair...

* * *

Lord Voldemort stood on the edge of a cliff on the mountains overlooking Hogwarts. A woman stood beside him, wearing a lovely deep green dress that fluttered and whipped in the wind.

“Lady Dredolreis, what do you see?” Voldemort’s question was almost a whisper.

“I see Hogwarts, standing as it has always been, as I have known it.” Lady Dredolreis responded. “What do you see, my Lord?”

"I see a castle that will be mine, within two years." Voldemort turned to her. "Do you agree?"

"Of course, my lord. There is no possible way the plan could fail..." Lady Dredolreis answered.

"Fool..." muttered Voldemort. "There is always a way a plan could fail. Always. Anyone who does not see that are doomed to failure."

"You worry about Eliza?" Lady Dredolreis asked.

"Worry? About Eliza? Eliza is nothing. Diawna will be great, of course, but Eliza has no future."

"You wish to kill her, my Lord?" Lady Dredolreis asked. She was very beautiful, with red brown curly hair that was swept up by the wind. Her voice held a trace of worry...

"Dredolreis... I'm surprised at you. Surely you are not harboring *feelings* for this child?" Voldemort asked. His tone was light, but there was cold steel encased in his words.

Lady Dredolreis laughed. "If I was not mindful of her purposes, I would have killed her years ago. I worry... she is powerful, whether she knows it or not."

"That would be why we would have to act now, while she is not fully trained." Voldemort grew quiet.

"My lord... when shall we remove Azkaban from the hand of the dementors?"

"When we can hide our presence no longer. We will lash out in full force at once. We will summon the banished giants. No one will know what hit them." Voldemort said lazily. "But surly, Dredolreis, you have figured that out for yourself."

"Your lordship is wiser then I," said Lady Dredolreis. "My lord, may I have the honor of killing Eliza?"

Voldemort smiled. "You may, Dredolreis. See that she dies within the year."

Lady Dredolreis grinned. Eliza would be no obstacle... the castle would be hers, soon enough...

* * *

Draco sat facing the cold November winds. He shivered, but did not bother to go inside the castle. What was the point.? There was no point... nothing mattered anymore...

A shadow descended over Draco. Draco looked up into the face of Wyrren, her hair looking like spun gold.

"Draco?" she asked.

“What?” he asked sharply.

Wyrren bit her lip. “Are you alright?”

“Do I look like I’m alright?” Draco asked. Wyrren shivered in the wind. “What can I do, Wyrren? Eliza saw me making fun of Potter and some of her other friends. Now she’s acting like I’ve insulted her, and I feel like I’ve lost everything.”

Wyrren sighed. “Well, first thing you can do is stop calling them by their last names. You call someone by their last names, it sounds like you’re about to make fun of them. It’s a good way to offend people without doing anything.”

“Next thing you can do is apologize for making fun of them. Tell Harry, Ron, and Hermione you’re sorry for making fun of them. They’ll tell Eliza, and she’ll come back.”

Draco stared at her. “How’s that work? You’re not making sense.”

“Oh? Am I?” Wyrren asked, her blue eyes glowing. “Eliza’s upset because she didn’t know you were the type of person to make fun of people. If you stop it, she might come back, hesitantly, after a while. Apologize to Harry, and she’ll just think that we all say stupid things, and she’ll come back to you much more quickly. And if you never make fun of someone again...”

Draco stared at her. “What then?”

“You’ll never loose her. Never.” Wyrren finished, sitting down next to him.

“You’re asking for a miracle, Wyrren.” Draco said at last.

Wyrren stood up again, and crossed her arms. “Do you want Eliza back, or don’t you? If you do what I tell you to, you’ll get her back. Or is she not worth it to you?”

Is she not worth it to you... the words burned. Eliza was worth everything in the world... Is she not worth it to you... Draco stood up in a rush, and ran towards the castle. Wyrren sprinted as fast as she could to keep up.

“By the way, Wyrren?” Draco asked as they got inside. “How do you know this? You’re just a first year.”

Wyrren smiled a bit and shrugged. “I’m a Gryffindor.” And with that, she strode down the hall.

Draco thought for a bit... when would be the best time to show Eliza that he’s changed... Eliza would have to be there, but he’d try not to make it too obvious. And a few other people, as well... when was he grouped up with the Gryffindors?

The answer hit him. The perfect answer. He groaned, wondering if he could do it...

Is she not worth it to you...? Wyrren’s words reechoed in his mind.

Potions...

Chapter Fifteen

James Potter flew as fast as he could to the home of Lucius Malfoy. Lily floated beside him.

“Do you think it was... wise... to agree to teach the animagus charm to that girl? It’s illegal!” Lily asked worriedly.

“She’s just a little girl. I’ll explain the concept to her, and she won’t understand it. Simple as that. No real harm done.” James said. “What matters most is that she can relay our messages to Harry. Nothing else matters.”

Lily frowned. “You’re underestimating her, James. That’s what I thought when I agreed to teach her my song charms. It took me until fifth year to master those. She’s a first year, and she’s almost got it the basics down perfectly.”

James looked at Lily. “She has?”

Lily nodded. “She’s talented and smart. She can sing murder right now.”

James shuddered. If anyone used Lily’s song charms wrongly... “How good is she?”

“Past Wolf level,” Lily said. They were approaching a huge mansion now. James slowed down a bit.

“Past Wolf lever?! How many levels past Wolf can there be?!” James asked.

“For a first year to get that far is nothing short of miraculous.” Lily said.

James shuddered again. Song charms were powerful things... He flew through the walls of Lucius Malfoy’s manor.

Lucius Malfoy was striding towards the door. Someone was knocking loudly. “I’m coming, half a moment!” He swung open the front door. Lily and James watched curiously.

A woman was standing there, heavily wrapped in a black cloak. Her icy green eyes flashed as Lucius opened the door.

Lucius looked extremely startled to see her there. “Lady Dredolreis, what a pleasure to see you!” he said quickly, bowing. “I hope you are well...”

“Skip the formalities, Lucius,” the woman growled as she slipped off her cloak. She wore a livid green dress that matched her eyes perfectly. The first thing that came to mind when you saw her was how short life is, and how much shorter she could make it, if you were to get on her bad side.

Lucius nodded meekly and walked into the living room. “What can I do for you, Lady Dredolreis?”

"I want you to make sure Eliza Snape does not live to see December." Dredolreis snarled. James frowned, staring at her face. Where had he seen her before...?

"Eliza Snape?" Lucius asked. "Why Eliza Snape?"

"Because, fool," Lady Dredolreis snarled. "Eliza Snape is the key for taking over the school! Once we have her, it will be no problem to kill Harry. If Hogwarts is ours, nothing in England can stand against us! The ministry of magic is already working for us, trying as hard as they can to cover up our presence. If Albus Dumbledore is taken out of the picture, then no one will be in our way. And Eliza Snape is the key."

"See that she dies, Lucius. Unless you wish to get on my bad side..." Dredolreis snapped. "And, if all possible, the Dark Lord also wishes the demise of her father, Severus. See if you can handle that."

Lucius nodded, and Dredolreis grabbed her cloak. "See that you do not fail me, Lucius," She told him, and with a swish of her cloak she was gone.

James looked after her for a moment. "Lily," he said slowly. "I know I have seen that woman before..."

Lily raised her eyebrows. "You haven't figured it out yet? Oh... right... you didn't get on her bad side, like I did. That was Deloris Amay Riddle, alias Lady Dredolreis, alias Deloris Snape."

* * *

"I can't believe Draco did that," Ron said at dinner, the next day. He was in shock, and his dinner was getting stone cold. "I can not believe he did that..."

"Ron, you've been saying that for the past two hours." Hermione said. "And it's obvious why he apologized, isn't it? He wants to get on good terms with Eliza."

"But! In front of Snape! And all the Slytherins?!" Ron shook his head. "Draco Malfoy could not have done that! Someone's been taking a polyjuice potion!"

"I think you're right, Hermione." Harry said. "Look,"

Hermione turned. Draco and Eliza were leaving the dining room, talking excitedly. Draco was grinning broadly. Several Slytherins were scowling at him, although a great deal of Gryffindors, Ravenclaws, and Hufflepuffs were greeting him as he passed.

Ron shook his head. "But he apologized! In potions!"

Harry shook his head and started back on his dinner. "I think Draco's sent Ron into shock, Hermione."

Hermione shook her head. "Draco's sent us all into shock,"

Eliza smiled as she flipped open the pages of her diary, her quill poised against the open page.

Dear Diary,

Draco has been acting a little strange lately. Not that I'm complaining, of course. Yesterday he apologized in front of the entire Potions class to Harry, Ron, and Hermione for making fun of them. The entire class was stunned. Severus stood there with his mouth half open for a full thirty seconds before managed to regain his composure. You should have seen the look on Pansy Parkinson's face! She looked as though I had put the imperius curse on Draco, or something.

That's not all. While I was walking to Arithmancy class, I heard Draco ask Harry if he wanted to practise quidditch sometime. Harry looked as though Draco had lobsters crawling out of his ears. I almost laughed out loud.

It's pretty obvious that this is an act on Draco's part. I saw him making fun of Harry, Hermione, and Ron, and I was so upset that he would embarrass me like that in front of my friends. So now he's really trying to get on my good side. A really sweet gesture, but one that's going to cost him dearly, if he doesn't watch his back.

By the way, Professor McGonagall announced today in transfiguration that there would be sort of a replica of the yule ball that I missed last year. It'll take place the day before everyone leaves so that more people can come. I hope Draco asks me, although he'd better ask me fast. I noticed that half the boys in class swung around to look at me during that little announcement.

I have to get going!

-Eliza

Wyrren frowned as James and Lily Potter landed before her. "Are you sure this information is accurate? They're targeting Eliza Snape next?"

James nodded. "I'm positive."

Wyrren frowned. "I'm just a first year... I don't know anyone named Eliza Snape... would she be related to Professor Snape?"

"His daughter," Lily said.

"You've seen Eliza," James said. "I've been keeping an eye on her. She's going by the name Eliza Diawna. You're brother's rather interested in her, I've noticed."

Wyrren laughed. "I'll try to get Harry to listen to me this time. Or maybe Eliza. But remember, I'm just a first year. Almost no one listens to a first year."

Told by Slyther

I wandered out of the castle. It was a nice, sunny day, but rather cold, just the same. It felt like the type of day snow should be on the ground. No snake feels comfortable in those temperatures. I turned to go back inside the castle. No sane snake would be comfortable in this weather...

I heard the soft hiss of another snake. I turned my head a bit and tasted the air. A... a boa was coming. What on earth was a boa doing here? I looked around some more. A king snake was coming, right behind that, a coral snake.

I was quite still for a while. Snakes, snakes of every size and description were flooding into the school, crossing the grounds. Everywhere I looked, there were more and more snakes, streaming in from everywhere imaginable. They entered the school from a low down, broken window.

It was the day of the parselmouth...

I shook my head. The tour was over. I had to speak with Eliza. Now.

Draco Malfoy walked along the halls towards breakfast. He couldn't stand it anymore... he couldn't! If one more Gryffindor started talking to him... he shook his head. Living in the company of those idiots were bad enough without every single Slytherin trying to find him alone to beat him up.

Speaking of which... Draco paused. The shadows of several people's heads were clearly outlined. Draco recognized Goyle's slouch, and Pansy's unique hairstyle. Great. Just what he needed. His old friends coming back to teach him a lesson.

For a moment, Draco considered skipping breakfast. Something told him not to do it. Besides, Eliza was waiting for him.

Draco pulled out his wand and stepped out to face whoever was waiting for him. Crabbe, Goyle, Pansy, Clara, And Mysticala were all standing there, grinning. Clara cracked her knuckles threateningly and grabbed the front of Draco's robes before he could blink.

"I wouldn't try anything if I were you," said a voice from the corridor. Pansy glanced over. Eliza, Hermione, Ron, and Harry were all standing there, their wands drawn.

Clara looked at Pansy, who snapped, "Back away."

Eliza lowered her wand a bit as Clara flung Draco back into the wall. "We saw them waiting for you. Thought we'd wait for them to try something before we cursed them or anything."

Draco rubbed his shoulder. "That would be like you, Pansy. Don't do anything when the odds are equal." Draco turned to Harry. "It seems I owe you again, Potter," he said acidly.

"Thank Eliza. She's the one who spotted them," Harry said.

Draco shrugged, and walked towards the dining hall. Harry, Ron, Hermione, and Eliza followed.

"Potter, can I talk with you for a moment?" Draco asked.

Hermione and Ron raised their eyebrows. Harry shrugged, and walked a few paces towards Draco.

"Why did you stand up for me?" Draco asked. "You know I hate your guts and the only reason I haven't beaten you up myself is because I'd lose Eliza if I tried anything like that."

"I know," Harry said. "I don't know why. Ask Eliza, she seems to know everything." He walked away to join his friends.

And Draco stood there, alone once more.

Chapter Sixteen

Diawna Eliza Snape was a graceful girl. Like her sister, she had the same I-could-be-a-model face and body. Unlike her sister, though, Diawna used these gifts to their full extent.

The dark of midnight covered the landscape out of the window. Diawna was allowed her own room at Weaver's school of magic. She rarely turned on a light, and the exotically furnished room was pitch black. There were dark, forbidding clouds on the way; Diawna could feel them. And they had nothing to do with the weather.

"Eliza, my dear sister," she murmured into the night air. "Soon all memory of you will be lost. A phone book, dear Eliza. Wasn't that always your greatest fear? I will become a legend, and there will be no trace of your existence. Everything you have done here is lost, and has accomplished nothing."

Diawna spoke as if Eliza could hear her whisper these words. Suddenly, a sharp pain on her left arm made her turn on the light.

The black image of a snake coming out of the mouth of a skull made her grin. Odd time for a summoning, but welcome, nevertheless. A call from the dark lord was always welcome. Diawna grabbed her wand and apperated into the night.

* * *

Told by Eliza Diawna Snape

I woke up with a start. Tonight, it would happen tonight. Diawna... she was in my dreams again. Laughing at me... telling me that I will not be remembered. My hand flew to my neck, where the shaded pendant had a death grip on my skin. Something was about to happen... I don't know how I knew, but somehow, I knew what Diawna was feeling.

She was thrilled, never a good sign. I slipped out of bed, put on my robes quietly, and headed out the door. Let someone catch me. Let anyone catch me. Something was about to happen.

"Eliza!" I turned. Slyther slithered towards me quickly. "Snakes! I've been looking all over for you! There are hundreds, maybe even thousands, of snakes coming!"

"I need to see Professor Dumbledore." I whispered to Slyther. "Something is happening."

"Come see for yourself. Something IS happening!" Slyther squirmed out of my grip and raced down the passage, toward one of the windows. I ran out of the windows and looked out.

"No!" I whispered. Figures in black were marching towards the school, masked in a ghostly green fog. Thousands of snakes crawled with them, keeping pace. One unmasked figure stood in front.

Lord Voldemort.

What should I do?! I looked at Slyther. "What do you expect me to do?!" I whispered.

"Tell the teachers!" Slyther nearly shouted. "Dumbledore is the only wizard Voldemort fears! The school is under attack!"

I looked around. The best way to attract a teacher's attention is to break something. Or get Filch or Mrs. Norris after you. I ran as fast as I could towards Dumbledore's office, deliberately making as much noise as I could.

Dumbledore's office is guarded by a large, stone gargoyle. Harry had told me that the password is the name of a candy.

"Having a midnight stroll, are we, Miss Snape?" Filch asked. Beside him was Mrs. Norris. I had never been so pleased to see anyone in my life.

“Mr. Filch! Out the window! There are death eaters and snakes... the castle’s under attack!”

“Nonsense... I know when someone’s tell...” Filch started.

I dragged him to the window. “Look!” I shouted.

Filch’s face went white in two seconds. “Snickers!” he shouted at the gargoyle. It sprang aside, and Eliza and Filch raced inside Dumbledore’s office.

* * *

Hermione didn’t know what was going on at first. There was screaming and blasts of sound so loud she felt as though her ears would fall off. “Attack!” Someone yelled.

Hermione rolled off the bed and threw her robes on, glancing around the room. Lavender and Parvati were looking confused. Eliza...

Hermione gasped. Eliza’s bed was empty. Hermione grabbed her robes, changed, and ran downstairs. People were appearing all over the place. Ron and Harry were there, fully dressed.

“Eliza’s gone!” Hermione shouted.

“Great... just great.” Ron muttered.

“Come on, we have to go look for her!” Hermione said.

“Right behind you Hermione,” Harry said, gripping his wand hard.
“Let’s go.”

The death eaters had gotten into the entrance hall. Lucius Malfoy blocked a spell Professor McGonagall had sent at him, and sent another one right back. Dumbledore had taken to battling Voldemort, with the help of Professor Flitwick. Dredolreis ran up the stairs, searching.

Professor Snape sprang out of no where, his wand raised. Dredolreis smiled behind her mask. “Getting slow, aren’t you Severus?”

Snape paled, but kept a firm grip on his wand. “Another duel, Deloris? I beat you once, I can do it again.”

“We shall see, Severus. We shall see.” Dredolreis raised her wand, but before she could do anything another death eater shot out at Snape. He redirected his attentions at the battle. Dredolreis slipped by, unnoticed.

Eliza was helping with the battle, along with a group of sixth and seventh year students. “I’m not one of the best in every class for nothing,” She muttered to Cho Chang beside her, shooting out a hex at one of the death eaters.

Cho laughed. “We’ll see how much good books can do you, I suppose.”

“Eliza!” Harry shouted.

Eliza took aim again and shot out at a new death eater. “Harry, beat it! It’s you they’re trying to kill!”

“Wrong, Eliza!” Wyrren shouted. “It’s you they want!”

“Wyrren, get out of here!” Harry screamed at her. “You’re a first year!”

Wyrren started singing. Harry glared at her, open mouthed and furious. Wyrren took no notice. She just kept singing, on and on. It was a strange, unearthly tune. She was singing of a rightful victory, lashing out at dark intruders. It filled Harry with power and rage. It changed the entire atmosphere of the battle.

Eliza suddenly started fighting twice as hard as before. Suddenly, the things looked very bad for the death eaters. There were flashes of light everywhere, but Hogwarts still seemed to be getting the upper hand... none of the death eaters seemed to remember the spells they needed in time.

Suddenly, one of them pointed her wand at the pale singing girl. Wyrren crumpled.

Something hissed. Eliza looked over. Hundreds of snakes were filling into the halls.

“Get out of here!” yelled Harry, in Parslelounge. The snakes looked at each other, confused.

“Don’t listen to him. Kill them.” Another voice rang out.

The snakes started forward again.

“Get away! Don’t come near us! Go back to your bright, warm deserts. There is nothing but snow for you here.” Eliza yelled to the snakes.

Harry and Eliza, together, slowly made the snakes retreat. Voldemort was too busy with Dumbledore and Flitwick to pay all his attention to them...

Dredolreis shot a blast of silver light at Cho. She fell down, stunned. Harry had gone up the hall, keeping the snakes at bay. Eliza was alone.

Dredolreis removed her mask. Eliza’s legs seemed to have turned into jelly suddenly... it was her mother... she gripped her wand harder, preparing to fight for her life...

“Avada Kedavra!” Dredolreis shouted, turning her wand on Eliza.

“Daddy!” Eliza screamed, throwing herself flat as the curse passed over her head and blasted the stone behind her. “Stupify!”

Her mother blocked it easily. “Nice dodge, Eliza.” Dredolreis sneered, and raised her wand again. “You won’t be so lucky again. Avada Ked...”

“Exspelliarmus!” Dredolreis’s wand flew out of her hand. Professor Snape was standing there, fire burning in his black eyes.

All around them, the death eaters were forced out of the castle. In what seemed like a single moment, all of the death eaters had appeared to have vanished, Dredolreis with them.

When Harry reached the hall where he had left Eliza, he saw something that astonished him. Eliza was sitting on the floor, holding her knees, crying into Snape's shoulder. "Thank you, Daddy..."

* * *

Wyrren sat on her bed without moving. Her face was plain and robotic like. Madam Pomfrey walked over to her and handed her a cup of potion. "You'll be alright. Drink this and go. Normally I'd want you here until tomorrow, but as it is..." she glanced over at the other students. Many had been wounded badly. Wyrren drank her potion without changing her expression, even though Madam Pomfrey knew the stuff tasted awful.

"Thank you," Wyrren said, stood up, and left the infirmary. "James, Lily, did you know that they were planning an attack tonight?"

A passing Ravenclaw gave Wyrren a funny look. Wyrren ignored him. "We lost two people, a third year who had sneaked out, and a seventh year trying to tackle one of the death eaters by himself. There's going to be a funeral for them, of course."

"Who are you talking to?" asked Ginny Weasley, coming up behind Wyrren. Wyrren's face turned blank at once.

"No one, Ginny. No one."

* * *

No one knew who started it, but word was getting out that the new American girl called Eliza was actually Snape's daughter. The story spread like wild fire, until people were stopping Eliza at every hallway asking her if she was related to Snape. Eliza had stopped lying, and was telling people outright that Professor Snape was her father.

"No point to it anymore." Eliza said gloomily after Charms the next day. "Every time I keep a secret it blows up in my face."

"You have any more secrets, Eliza?" Ron asked.

Eliza sighed. "Many. But I'm not telling you what they are."

Ron looked at her. "What else could you possibly be hiding! Your mother is a death eater, your father is none other then professor Snape, you've been sent here from America because your mother was worried about you because someone keeps sending you death threats..."

"That's not the reason my mother sent me here." Eliza said. "My mother sent me here so she could kill me."

Ron stared at her. "What else could you possibly be hiding?"

Eliza shook her head. “You don’t want to know, Ron. Trust me, you don’t want to know...”

Chapter Seventeen

At the funeral service, Harry didn’t know who the third year girl was. She was sort of pretty, with long dirty blond hair in ringlets. He knew the other boy that had died. His name was Lee Jordan, and he was Fred and George’s best friend. He was the one who always commentating on the quidditch matches. Harry could just here him now. ‘And Flint is flying alongside Angelina Johnson... Poke him in the eye, Angelina! No, Professor, it was a joke, it was only a joke...’

Eliza was taking this especially hard. She had a haunted look on her face since entering the funeral service. Wyrren Malfoy had turned emotionless, but was staring hard at the bodies in the coffins.

Harry walked closer to Wyrren. “Do you see them?”

Wyrren turned a bit towards Harry. “No. They are not restless. They have nothing more to do here.”

Eliza turned to Hermione, who was trying to comfort her. “But who will be next...?” Eliza asked. “I nearly joined them. What if this had been my funeral?”

Draco Malfoy was at the farthest side of the room. As much as he didn’t want to admit it, some of Lee Jordan’s pranks were quite amusing. Like the time he had set loose his pet tarantula in the girl’s bathroom. Of course, Fred and George helped, but still, it was funny. The way those girls were screaming... Draco shook his head. A Gryffindor and a Hufflepuff died. Why should he care? He turned and walked away.

Why did he care?

* * *

Albus Dumbledore looked evenly at Cornelius Fudge, the minister of magic. The minister had marched to the school the morning after he had received Dumbledore’s owl on the attack.

“I will not allow you to spread rumors and havoc about the school! It was bad enough telling them that Cedric Diggory was killed by you-know-who! I was flooded by panic-stricken letters for weeks after that! The ministry is in a tough enough spot now, stifling the rumors!”

“If you see fit to close your eyes to what is happening, Cornelius, I will not stop you. Two students were killed last night, as well as a death eater.

Should I show you the body? Harry Potter listed his name for you last summer as a follower of Lord Voldemort. Will you listen to me, now? Only a Parsletounge could have driven the snakes in... Voldemort has such a gift." Dumbledore's voice was unpressing, but his blue eyes burned.

"So does Harry Potter! I believe he was speaking to the snakes that night!" Fudge exclaimed. "You seem so intent on sending people into a panic! There is nothing wrong! So some fool got an idea to charge the school?! We had those same lunatics doing similar things at the quidditch world cup!"

"If that is what you believe, Fudge, I have no power to change it. I must go address the students, the funeral is almost over." Dumbledore rose from his desk, and walked out of the office. Fudge glared at his retreating figure... then got up and left.

"Percy," he muttered to the boy standing outside of the office. He was a bright lad, and had risen quickly in the ministry, going from head of the department for international magical cooperation to becoming Fudge's personal assistant over the summer. "Albus is being difficult again. Do anything you have to, just stop the rumors of Voldemort's return. I don't want any more riots!"

Percy Weasley nodded at once, then accompanied Fudge out of the school.

* * *

"Check mate," Ron said lazily, grinning at Eliza. Eliza sighed.

"Hermione, has Ron ever been beaten at chess? This is the fourteenth game I've lost to him!" Eliza said, glaring at Ron. Ron chuckled and his pieces rearranged themselves back into orderly rows.

"Nope," Hermione said in an offhand way, lifting her head up from her homework. "Has Draco asked you to go with him to the winter ball?"

Eliza smiled a bit. "He asked me as soon as he heard about it."

"And you said?" Hermione pressed.

Eliza rolled her eyes. Ron looked at her eagerly, barely paying attention to the game.

"What do you think I said? Ron, your turn." Eliza teased.

"Because if you said no, will you go with me?" Ron asked, making his move, hardly glancing at the chessboard.

"Oh, I agreed to go with him," Eliza laughed, and her grin grew vicious. "Check mate!"

"What?" Ron asked, then groaned. "Harry! I've fallen for a fool mate!"

"Really?" Harry asked, coming to look at the pieces.

"That's what you get for not paying attention." Eliza said smugly.

“Play again?” Ron asked. His pieces rearranged themselves back into order.

“Play again! I just beat the great Ron Weasley!” Eliza said. “Besides, you beat me the first fourteen times. You should be happy.”

“You never would have beaten me at all if... oh, never mind.” Ron grumbled.

Harry grinned. “Hermione, have you been asked out yet?”

Hermione shook her head. “Neville asked me to go with him... again... but I just said I’d think about it.”

Harry’s grin turned sly. “How about going with me, then?”

Eliza started giggling. Ron raised his eyebrows at Harry and gave him a knowing look. Harry turned red.

Hermione smiled. “Well, alright.”

Ron started making impressions of Harry turning red and looking embarrassed. Eliza burst out laughing. Hermione stifled a giggle as Harry swung around and saw Ron doing in the middle of a spirited impression of Harry stuttering.

Harry lifted one eyebrow. Ron immediately changed into a ‘who? me?’ pose.

Hermione grinned at Eliza. “This ought to be interesting.”

* * *

Hermione, Harry, Ron, and Draco were waiting impatiently for Eliza in the library. “What do you think will happen next?” Hermione asked. “Eliza tells her story like a novel.”

Eliza entered the library, smiled once at Madam Pinch, and moved to the back table of the library.

“Are my stories that popular? I ought to get them published.” Eliza grinned.

“Eliza, is that blood?” Hermione asked, looking at her hand.

Eliza’s grin grew wider. “Pansy and Clara won’t be trying that again. You should have seen their faces.”

“Speaking of which, why don’t you tell us who hit you a month or so ago?” Draco asked.

Eliza bit her lip. “I can’t tell.”

“Well, then, get on with the story!” Ron said. Eliza smiled and started talking...

It was spring now, and he was a second year. Ever since the incident on the broomstick, Severus hadn't passed up the opportunity to throw an insult or a curse at James Potter. James, on the other hand, had gotten on the house Quidditch team as soon as he became a second year. James now had his own little group, with Black, Lupin, and that fat Pettigrew. Lily thought they were idiots, much to Severus' satisfaction.

Severus Snape stared out of the window. Madam Pomfrey was escorting Remus Lupin across the grounds. Remus had looked awful, shivering and moaning. "Where do you think he's going?" he asked Ryan in an offhand way.

"Who cares? You going to finish your charms homework?" Ryan asked.

"I will, I will," Severus stared back out the window. "I'm going to check out that tree."

"What? Are you nuts? That's the whomping willow!" Ryan sneered. "Or is nothing too great for Curse Master Snape?"

Severus smiled a bit. Curse Master Snape... the name had possibilities. "I'm going to go check it out. Be back in half an hour,"

Ryan jumped up to follow Severus. "You're nuts, Snape."

"Then why are you coming with?" Severus asked.

Severus and Ryan made their way to the grounds, up to the whomping willow. "Did you see where Lupin went, Ryan?" Severus asked.

Ryan shook his head. "You were the one watching the window, not me."

Severus sighed. "Potter knows, I bet."

Ryan rolled his eyes. "James Potter and Sirius Black know everything, haven't you noticed that yet? They can even listen to Professor Binns..."

Severus rolled his eyes. "A truly amazing accomplishment. Professor Binns is going to drop dead any moment now." Severus paused for a moment. That was it. That was the way to beat Potter at what he was best at... he'd beat him in schoolwork. He could just see it now, Potter glaring at him while he showed off his head boy badge...

Severus grinned and walked back to the castle... Curse Master Snape... the name had definite possibilities.

Eliza glanced up. "Well? What happens now?" Ron asked.

Eliza sighed. "I'll tell you later," And she ran out of the library.

Draco frowned. "What was up with that?"

* * *

December 2

Dear Diary,

I keep having these nightmares and horrid visions of my friends asking me questions... things that I know I shouldn't answer. I hate keeping secrets. What if I slipped and told them who actually did hit me? Or why the snakes have been coming here? Or why Voldemort is out to get me? What if I told them about the prophecy?

I'm stuck. If I told people everything I know, people's lives will be in danger. If I don't tell them everything, people's lives will still be in danger. What should I do? How can I live here, knowing exactly what's going on and not be able to tell people?

I shouldn't be in Gryffindor. I shouldn't be in here at all. I try to keep up my 'perfect heroine' act, but it keeps slipping. Nothing is working anymore. I can't keep these secrets. If I really belonged in Gryffindor, I'd just leave and not hurt anyone. I don't know what I should do. And what about the shaded pendant?! I just don't know anything... Is it right that I keep these secrets? I'm just confused now...

-Eliza

* * *

The winter ball wasn't anywhere as big as the yule ball that took place last year, but it still got the entire school into a state of delightful panic and drama. Hermione and Eliza spend hours in the library, looking up fashions and dance steps.

The great hall was filled with falling snow, which turned out to be quite warm. Ron was having a rather hard time finding a date, though.

"There are hundreds of girls in this school!" he muttered to Harry, entering the common room. "You'd think one of them would go out with me, at least."

"How many have you asked, Ron?" Hermione asked.

"One," Ron said sheepishly. "Eliza, but she'd going with Draco." Ron pretended to strangle himself.

"Hey!" Eliza snapped at him.

"Ok... why don't you try asking someone?" Harry asked.

"Well... I've tried... but every time I get close to a girl she's talking about her date!" Ron moaned.

"Why don't you try, now?" Hermione scolded.

Ron sighed and stomped out of the Gryffindor tower.

“What? Did I say something?” Hermione asked.

They didn’t see Ron until three hours later, and he came back with a big grin spread across his face. “Got one!”

“Well? Who did you ask out?” Eliza asked.

“You guys know Eve? She’s a Ravenclaw fourth year?” Ron asked.

“Eve... Eve...” Harry thought hard for a moment. “Black hair, big turquoise eyes? Long eyelashes?”

Ron nodded happily. Harry sighed. “She’s on the Ravenclaw Quidditch team. She’s the keeper... incredible at Quidditch.”

“And she’s going with me.” Ron said smugly.

* * *

Diawna Eliza Snape and Lady Dredolreis stood in front of the dark lord. “You have failed me, Dredolreis.” Voldemort growled.

“I should have been in the main charge,” Diawna muttered. “If I wasn’t set in the background egging the snakes on...”

“And you would have gotten yourself killed, and the entire plan would have been a waste.” Dredolreis hissed at her.

“I can take care of myself,” Diawna said, crossing her arms. “As I have tried to prove, in front of all the death eaters, I am more than capable at that.”

Voldemort shook his head. “Next charge, you will not fail me, Dredolreis”

Dredolreis bowed slightly. “Yes, my lord,”

Chapter Eighteen

Told by Draco Malfoy

It was the night of the winter ball, and I must have been the most nervous boy at Hogwarts. I was still having trouble believing that Eliza was going to be my date. I heard three other Slytherin boys plotting to ask her out the moment Professor Flitwick announced it. I told them off, saying that Eliza was my date, but I was still pretty nervous. Eliza’s popularity actually took a great leap when people found out about her last name being Snape.

I was waiting for Eliza at the entrance hall. Ron Weasley was standing a few feet away, waiting for his Ravenclaw date. He had new dress robes, a nice velvety dark brown that didn’t look that bad on him, although I didn’t tell him that, of course. I had gotten new dress robes as well, with long hanging sleeves, featuring a deep dusky blue.

Hermione's voice sounded through the staircase. Harry, in the same emerald robes he wore last year was leading Hermione, who looked stunning. She had once again made her hair sleek and elegant, and she held her head up high as she passed.

Behind Hermione, a few feet back, came Eliza. She looked stunning. There was no other word for it. She was wearing tight, forest green dress robes that brought out a bit of the green tint in her eyes. Her hair had been let down in back, and it hung in lazy, luxurious curls.

I think my mouth dropped open somewhere along the line, and I remember having trouble speaking for a few moments. I walked over to Eliza and took her hand.

Her skin felt like rose petals.

Professor McGonagall opened up the doors into the great hall. I passed Ron, who was leading an extremely pretty Ravenclaw girl, and walked into the great hall.

Somewhere in the crowd I noticed Pansy Parkinson shaking with anger and glaring at Eliza. I didn't care. All the Slytherins could get lost as far as I was concerned. Eliza was mine.

Somewhere in the distance a band started playing. Eliza looked at me.

"Do you want to dance?" I asked hesitantly. Eliza smiled and took my hand.

"Lets,"

We danced. We danced song after song. I barely even noticed anyone else there. Somewhere along the line we had moved out onto a balcony. I didn't notice. All I could see was Eliza.

I didn't kiss her. I didn't do anything but dance and watch her. It was enough. Somehow just being with her... it was enough.

When the dance finally ended, Eliza left for her dormitory. I escorted her part of the way there.

Tomorrow most of the students would be gone. I was staying. Eliza and I would have the run of the castle.

When I slept that night, my dreams were filled of music and dancing girls. And I was happy.

* * *

Eliza looked around the dark, empty dormitory and sighed. It was the first night of the winter holidays, and Hermione had gone home to spend Christmas with her family along with all the other girls.

She felt nervous, for some reason, the way she had felt just before the attack on the school. She brushed the feeling off and fell asleep.

Diawna hovered outside Eliza's window on her broomstick. Her twin looked so rested... Diawna smiled as she carefully cast a spell to make the glass pane on Eliza's window disappear. Eliza stirred a bit.

Diawna hovered closer, took careful aim, and said, "Imperio!"

* * *

Told by Eliza Snape

I woke up to the dreamy feeling that I was flying far away from all my worries. I got out of bed, put on my robes, and headed out the door.

The imperius curse! A little voice in the back of my head screamed. No! Not again!

I ignored the voice and carefully snuck up to Harry's dormitory. Once there, I opened his trunk and shuffled as quietly as I could until I found his invisibility cloak. I put it on and walked swiftly down the stairs.

No! The voice screamed at me. Don't do it! Break the curse!

I ignored the voice. It had no meaning.

I walked until I reached the edge of the forbidden forest. I waited there.

Diawna landed beside me and dismounted off her broomstick. She walked a little ways into the forbidden forest. I took the cloak off and followed her.

Eliza! Gain control of yourself!

Diawna turned abruptly. I halted and waited.

Suddenly the curse vanished. I collapsed in a heap.

Diawna sneered. "Hello, again, Eliza."

"What do you want, Diawna?" I asked her, rising to a crouched position. Diawna smiled.

"I just want to talk to you, oh beloved sister."

I stood up, facing my twin. we were identical in every way... except that there was an aura of power and great beauty around Diawna that I have never had.

"I swear, Diawna, one of these days I'm going to kill you," I said through gritted teeth. Diawna flashed a dazzling smile.

"You wouldn't dare. Remember the prophecy?"

"I don't care about the prophecy." I lied.

Diawna's smile grew even more lovely and terrifying. She drew herself up to her full height and began to quote, "One shall be Voldemort's chosen

heir, the other shall die before her sixteenth birthday. One soul shall perish in agony, and the other will live happily ever after,”

I shook my head.

“So you see, Eliza, dear, if you were to kill me, that would be one side of the prophecy fulfilled. I haven’t been named Voldemort’s chosen heir yet, although I’m rather close. If you were to kill me now, you’d end up taking my place,” Diawna laughed. “I believe you have a little over six months to live, Eliza dear.”

“Why are you calling me out here, then? Just kill me now and be done with it!”

Diawna’s grin grew cunning. “Oh, no I couldn’t possibly do that! You see, the responsibility of killing you has done to Lady Dredolreis. I’d be the one to do the dirty work, and she’ll get all the credit. She gets one more try, and then my Lord will get very displeased if she fails.”

“You want me to live so mother will get demoted?” I asked in disbelief. “You said that once you’re the chosen heir of Voldemort I’m free to kill you,”

Diawna grinned. “I am more than capable of taking care of myself. Now listen to me. There will be another raid over the Easter holidays. I want you to make sure that you stay out of the way.”

“If you think I will cooperate with you, Diawna, you low down rotten little piece of scum...” I flinched as Diawna slapped me across the face.

“Now, I, get going.”

I glared at her and turned back towards the school.

“Oh, and Eliza!” I turned back to face my twin. “Before I forget, I’m going to have to make sure you don’t tell anything that could endanger our mission...”

I broke into a run. I knew what was coming...

Diawna crippled me with a quick shot of her wand. “Nice try, Eliza. Imperio!”

I was once more under my twin’s control. I slipped on Harry’s cloak and walked to the castle.

* * *

Harry stared at Eliza as she came down to breakfast. Although she seemed perfectly cheerful, there was another hand print shaped bruise on her face, the exact size and shape of the one she wore months before.

“Eliza?” Draco asked, raising an eyebrow and glancing at Harry. “Where did you get that bruise?”

“What bruise?” Eliza asked. “Oh... the one on my face?”

Draco and Harry nodded.

"I fell down the stairs again. What can I say? I'm clumsy..." Eliza smiled and started eating her breakfast again.

Draco leaned towards Harry. "Is it just me or do you get the feeling there is something very creepy going on?" he whispered.

Harry nodded. "I think we should go check with Wyrren. She has ghosts all over the place. She might know what's going on."

Draco nodded and walked down the table. Wyrren always sat at the very end. She wasn't very popular, and none of the seats around her were taken.

"Wyrren?" Harry asked.

"What is it?" Wyrren asked, eating mechanically.

"Wyrren, snap out of it. Have any of your ghosts seen something strange going on? Someone hit Eliza again."

Wyrren stopped eating and looked calmly at her brother and Harry. "I'll ask around," she said finally. "Although most of the ghosts around here know to tell me if anything strange happens."

"Thanks, Wyrren," Harry said.

Draco shook his head and got up from the table. "That doesn't help us at all. What we need is someone smart enough to keep their eyes open and alert at all times. Most ghosts don't care one way or the other on what's happening in the world of mortals."

"We can ask the snakes," Harry said.

Draco turned. "That might be useful. Doesn't Eliza have a pet snake?"

"Yes," Harry said. "Although I haven't seen Slyther since Snape threatened to throw him out of the school. I can't talk to snakes unless I'm face to face with one... or else looking at a picture or something. That's how I opened up the chamber of secrets."

"You know... we never really found out where all those snakes went." Draco said. "You know... the snakes that came when the death eaters attacked. Could they have gotten into the chamber of secrets?"

Harry frowned. "Perhaps... I killed the basilisk in there, but snakes could probably still get in..."

"We should check that out. Where's the entrance to the chamber?"

Harry winced. "Girls bathroom, second floor. It's abandoned, though, ever since Moaning Myrtle moved in."

"You went in a girls bathroom?" Draco said, a wicked grin spreading across his face.

"Keep it down!" Harry muttered. Draco started snickering uncontrollably. "Can you get us in?"

"No problem,"

Chapter Nineteen

Harry Potter and Draco Malfoy walked down the hallway, towards Moaning Myrtle's bathroom. "Got to warn you, though. Don't say ANYTHING that Moaning Myrtle could even possibly take offence at. She'll start crying in her toilet and flood the place."

Draco started snickering again. "Why did you go in there?"

"Well... remember second year at Christmas? When you showed Crabbe and Goyle that article about Ron's dad getting fined fifty Galleons?" Harry asked, wondering why on earth he was telling this to Draco. Really, Draco Malfoy? What was he thinking?!

Draco groaned. "I was an idiot second year, don't remind me. How would you know what I was doing? You didn't sneak in to our common room, did you?"

"Well... Hermione made a polyjuice potion, because we thought you were the one setting the basilisk on everybody, so Ron and I went down as Crabbe and Goyle to hear you confess." Harry said, wondering if he had lost all of his sanity.

Draco, actually, started snickering again. "Clever. Where'd you get the potions ingredients?"

"Snape's office..." Harry said. "Hermione took them when I... um... put the firework in Goyle's potion."

Draco stopped walking and stared at Harry. "And I thought you guys were a group of goody two shoes!" he started laughing. "Hermione, the Hermione 'I've-never-broken-a-rule-in-my-life' Granger stole potions ingredients out of SNAPE'S OFFICE?!"

Harry couldn't help himself. He started laughing, too.

"Hang on! I remember that firework!" Draco suddenly glared at Harry. "That was the firework that made the potion splatter all over and hit me in the face, wasn't it?"

"Um... yea..." Harry muttered.

"And you made a polyjuice potion IN a girl's toilet?!" Draco repeated.

"Well... no one EVER came in there... it seemed a pretty good idea..." Harry muttered.

Draco just started laughing though. "Not a bad idea, actually. Is that the bathroom?"

Harry nodded. "That's where the chamber of Secrets is located."

Draco stopped laughing at once. Both boys took out their wands. "I just want you to know, Potter, that I am doing this for Eliza. This has NOTHING to do with you. Got it?"

Harry nodded, looked around once to make sure no one was coming, and flung the door open.

"And what do *you* want?" A girl's voice floated out. A ghostly head popped out of the first stall, looking suspicious and morbid, as always.

"I was wondering if you were ever going to come and visit me." she said sulkily to Harry.

"Yes... how have you been doing, Myrtle?" Harry asked, then turned to the sink, doing his best to picture the figure on the tap as a real snake. "Open," he hissed.

Draco was looking very nervous now, staring into the great black hole that had appeared.

"As if **YOU** care," Myrtle sniffed. The only person who comes to visit me at all is that blonde girl..."

"Well, nice talking to you, Myrtle." Harry said swiftly. Draco looked ready to make a sour remark.

Myrtle puffed up. "You're just trying to get rid of me, aren't you?"

Draco swallowed nervously. "Do we really have to do this? How about if we get Myrtle to go see if there are any snakes down there... she can fly through walls..."

Myrtle looked furious. "Well, isn't that nice? Just call on Myrtle to do chores for you, like check up on the snakes in the basement? You only do talk to me when you need my help. Don't you think I have feelings?" Myrtle started crying and jumped into the toilet.

Draco turned to Harry, looking worried. "Well, I guess this was my idea... you want to go first, Potter?"

Harry looked down into the black pit. "Sure... I'm the parseltongue, anyway. Should be no problem."

Harry took a deep breath, and stepped into the tunnel, wondering if Draco would follow.

Draco came in right after he did. The slide was as dark and slippery and as he remembered. He landed hard at the end.

Draco landed right after he did. "Oh, pleasant ride, Potter."

"Lumos!" Harry whispered to his wand. Draco did the same.

The trip wasn't half as horrible as when Harry had gone this way in second year. Perhaps that was because he wasn't going up against a basilisk this time.

Draco didn't speak at all until the doors of the chamber of secrets appeared. Draco gaped at the figures of snakes with the emerald eyes. "Whoa..."

"Open," Harry hissed.

And together they stepped into the chamber.

* * *

Told by Slyther

The doors of the chamber of secrets burst open. Montrig frowned. "More snakes? We have over one thousand already. Food is getting scarce. We can't keep on stealing from the kitchen..."

Two boys, one with black hair and one with silvery blonde hair stepped into the room. One of the boas rose up. "The black haired boy is a parselmouth!"

The other snakes stirred. I looked closely at them. "I know who they are!" I called. "It's Harry Potter and Draco Malfoy!"

Harry turned as his name was called. "Slyther? Is that you?"

I slid forward. Many of the snakes were grumbling. What were humans doing here? The parselmouth was fine, but the other one had no right...

"You never told me you were a parselmouth," I said.

"Harry, what are you saying? You'd better not say anything to make them attack us," Draco said. I couldn't understand a word of it. Understanding human speech isn't my talent. Draco was scared and resentful. I recognized him as the one who had marched out of the common room in the dungeons.

Harry felt impatient. He said something to Draco. Draco at once drew back, and his resentment rose. His fear turned to worry.

One of the other snakes laughed. "They're fools!" she yelled. I glanced back. Of course. It was Crymalin, the only one out of all of us who could understand all the humans, including muggles.

"Fools or not, they came this way for something!" called Montrig, a big kingsnake. "Let them get their information and leave!"

"They are looking for information on someone called 'Eliza'!" Crymalin called back.

Another gardener snake approached. Her name was Tigo, and she was rather shy, but her gift was to be able to know what people's personalities were like. "I like the black haired boy," she said softly. "The blonde is rather timid and spiteful, though."

"Enough!" Harry yelled. "I've come to see if any of you know Eliza Snape, also called Eliza Diawna. She's been hiding secrets from us. Does anyone know who hit her?"

There was an instant uproar at his words. Tiny dust snakes writhed and Lonorla, the great reticulated python at the end of the hall screamed, "Let her keep her secrets! She is of no concern of ours!"

"Eliza is a parselmouth! She is a concern!"

“Eliza? That girl that drove us back? We should have killed her while we had the chance!”

Draco said something to Harry. He had lost his resentment was becoming more and more afraid.

“Nagini would not approve! She holds this council...” a snake roared. I turned. Oh, of course. It was Glenturd, a magical winged snake with fangs five inches long. I hated Glenturd with a passion. His gift was to bring on fear. “Eliza is the one we were to kill!”

“Mistress Diawna told us to leave her be!”

“Since when is Diawna head of council?”

“Just kill them both and be done with it!”

“He’s a parselmouth! We are not to harm him!”

“Kill the other one then!”

“They’ll go as soon as they find out we have nothing to tell them!”

“What if we do have something to tell them?”

“Who cares?”

“Has anyone seen anything of Eliza?”

Harry said something to Draco. Draco became a bit less afraid and more interested. The chamber of secrets is a very interesting place, after all.

“I have an idea!” Tigo apparently was using all her courage to say this. Every bickering snake stopped speaking. Tigo was a member of the council, as I am, and was very well known for being shy. “Let’s send a few of our people with them! He wants to find out who is hurting his friend. He is right, we might have known. But apparently we don’t, or else someone doesn’t want to tell us. It would be nice to get back to the world above, at any rate. Our talents would be useful!”

“How would want to go on a suicide mission like that?!” Glenturd yelled. I glared at him. He spread his wings wide.

“I will!” someone yelled.

“And me!” I turned to look. A tiny dust snake came forward. “Please don’t be afraid, master Draco,”

Draco became astonished. The dust snake chuckled. “It’s my talent! People can understand me, and I can understand wizards and witches. Not muggles, unfortunately, but you take what you can get. I’m Neptune, by the way.”

The other snake came forward. He was a rattlesnake, although very small for one of his species. “I want to go. My name is Glen, and my talent is to see magic,”

“We accept your help.” Harry said. “Slyther, are you going to come?”

I laughed. “And who would keep Glenturd in place then? Tigo?”

Several of the other snakes laughed as well. Glenturd was not exactly popular.

"Glen, you're with me. Neptune, you can go with Draco, since you can communicate with him."

"I understand," Neptune muttered.

"We'll figure something out," Harry said. "Thank you for your help!"

"Go quickly before Nagini comes. She'll kill you both for sure," I told Harry. He frowned.

"Nagini? Voldemort's pet?"

Everyone laughed. No snake wants to be called a pet, except for Nagini. Most of us thought her an obeying fool, sortof like a teacher's pet in a class.

"That's right, Voldemort's pet," Montrig laughed. "Slyther is right, you'd better go. You don't want to see Nagini when she's mad,"

Harry smiled. "Thank you,"

Montrig shook his head. "If you ever need help, Harry Potter, I do believe most of us will help you. We do appreciate the company of parselmouths, despite our long debates,"

Harry nodded, and he, Draco, Neptune, and Glen left the chamber.

"Well, that was a bit of excitement, wouldn't you say?" Glenturd laughed. "They were pretty brave to come down here like that."

I nodded. "We'll be seeing them again. I have no doubts about that..."

* * *

"So, any ideas on how to get back up?" Draco asked Harry, staring at the slide.

"Oh, that's easy!" Neptune said. Draco held her fondly. She fit right inside of his hand. "All you have to do is tell it to let you up. Here, I'll show you,"

Neptune hissed something at it. Harry laughed. "What did she say?" Draco asked.

"She was threatening it with some rather... harsh language." Harry chuckled, and gestured at the slippery tunnel. It had become a set of stairs. "I'd never think of threatening the stairs like that..."

Glen laughed. Even Draco could tell he was laughing.

"Ok, now, where is this Eliza?" Neptune asked. "I look forward to meeting her."

* * *

Harry and Draco came out of the chamber about an hour after they had come in. "Think it's lunch time yet?"

Harry checked his watch. "Not quite... let's check the library, Eliza's usually in there."

Draco shrugged.

"You know, it's not fair," Draco said while they were walking towards the library. "Why do you get to be the parselmouth? I would have given anything to know what those snakes were saying... I am the one in Slytherin, after all."

Harry hesitated, not sure what Draco wanted him to say. He decided just to keep quiet.

Draco opened the door of the library. "Is she in there?" Harry asked.

"No... I don't see her," Draco shrugged. "You can check your dormitory. I'm not exactly welcome in there..."

Harry laughed. "There's only Ron, Fred, George, Eliza and I in there."

"That's not exactly a welcoming crew," Draco muttered. "Alright, Fred and George would think it great fun if a Slytherin snuck in there. Eliza would probably just roll her eyes. But Ron... besides, are you INVITING me into your common room?" Draco laughed. The absurdity...

Harry laughed as well. "Sorry, I forgot you were a Slytherin for a second."

"Not that hard to figure out," Draco said. "I'll wait for you outside the common room door,"

Harry nodded, and walked to the Gryffindor portrait of a fat lady.

"I'll wait here. Tell me if Glen notices anything unusual," Draco said. Harry agreed and walked into the Gryffindor common room. Draco Malfoy... what was he thinking? He gently set Glen down inside his empty bookbag.

Harry walked up the girl's staircase holding the bookbag, something that normally he'd never do. He knocked on Eliza's door.

"Who is it?" Eliza opened the door. "Harry, you aren't allowed up here."

"I know, I know. You still not going to tell us who hit you?"

Eliza laughed. "Like I said, I'm clumsy. No one hit me, why do you keep harping on that?"

Harry crossed his arms. Eliza winced.

"Alright... alright... I'll tell you." Eliza sighed. "It was Severus,"

But something was wrong. Eliza jerked a bit as she said that.

"Eliza, are you alright?" Harry asked.

Eliza smiled again. "I'm fine. You'd better get going. Someone will catch you."

Harry walked down the stairs. Glen stuck his head out of the bag.

"Harry, I have no clue what that was, but Eliza's been enchanted." Glen said. "Looked like a curse, to me. It was blue and glowing..." Glen shuddered. "It looked bad. If I were you, I'd get help. Now."

Chapter Twenty

Lucius Malfoy shook with anger at the piece of parchment in his hand from Professor Snape. It read:

Lucius,

I feel that I should inform you of your son's affections of a Gryffindor girl. This evening I saw him talking quite casually to Harry Potter and Ronald Weasley. Anything you can write to Draco, stop him. At first I thought that it would cause Eliza to act more like a true Slytherin. I was wrong. Draco is now the enemy of all his Slytherin friends, and spends his time with the other houses. I repeat: stop him. Eliza Snape isn't good enough for him, and he knows it. And if Draco likes Eliza just for her looks, my daughter Diawna should be good enough for him. She is Eliza's twin, after all.

Severus

Eliza Snape? Wasn't that the Eliza Snape he was to kill? Lucius threw the paper in the fire. His son would be of no use to him now, something he had been counting on. He winced. Lady Dredolreis had been most displeased when he had not been there to assist in killing Eliza.

Lucius frowned. Severus had no idea, and Lucius would have to kill him sooner or later, but this made things much more complicated...

* * *

Diawna Eliza Snape stood before Lord Voldemort, standing high and proud.

Voldemort turned towards her. Diawna waited.

"Diawna, I am pleased with your progress,"

"Thank you, my lord," Diawna said.

"In fact, I am so pleased that I would like you to become second in command, my chosen heir,"

At last. Diawna's eyes gleamed. "You are gracious, my lord,"

"Which means that you are now responsible for the demise of your twin sister. Are you ready to accept this task?" Voldemort asked.

"Yes, my lord," Of course she was! She could have Eliza die right now, just get her to fling herself off of the turret... But no... that wouldn't do... Eliza had to die dramatically, when she alone appeared to be the one who could perform this task. Act now, and people would think Eliza suicidal.

Diawna turned away and grinned. With the imperius curse on Eliza, staging a dramatic duel would be child's play...

Diawna apperated to the forbidden forest, and laughed.

* * *

Albus Dumbledore sat looking at the door of his office with amusement. The voices of three boys floated through the door...

"This WAS your idea," one argued.

"Oh, stop complaining. If anyone would know what to do, it would be Dumbledore," the other said.

"Dumbledore... why don't we just ask Snape? We're not supposed to be up here... what if they give me detention?"

"Snape hates Eliza, haven't you noticed?" Harry knocked on the door.

It opened at once. Harry Potter, Draco Malfoy, and Ron Weasley stood there, Draco sneering at the other two.

"What is it?" Dumbledore asked, his blue eyes twinkling.

"It's Eliza. She's been enchanted, most likely cursed, and we don't know what to do," Harry said. Ron glared at Draco, who glared back.

Dumbledore leaned forward in his chair. "How do you know she's been bewitched at all?"

"Glen... this rattlesnake can see magic," Harry answered, bringing out Glen out of his bag.

Dumbledore's eyebrows rose. "Really?" he grabbed his wand and twirled it around his fingers. "Glen, what do you see?"

Harry translated for Glen. Glen looked all around the room, and started hissing. "I see globes of magic that look like stars... glimmering golden and appearing very sharp. Now there are bubbles of purple light coming from his wand... that's about it,"

Harry repeated this to Dumbledore. Dumbledore frowned. "Tell me what this... enchantment look like?"

Glen hesitated. "It looked like a shell around her, an electric blue shell that was humming pleasantly... whenever it moved, she moved as well. It looked like it was guiding her movements. Also... there was a small cloud of

green fog around her head... that's pretty much it. She didn't seem too happy about it."

Harry again translated. Dumbledore was on his feet in a moment. "Let's go,"

Dumbledore walked quickly through the door. "Where was Eliza last?"

"In our common room, girl's dormitory," Ron said at once. "What is it, Professor?"

"I'm not entirely sure," Dumbledore said.

Draco doubted this. They walked quickly to the Gryffindor tower. Draco, after a few misgivings, climbed into the Gryffindor tower after Harry and Ron.

Dumbledore walked up the stairs of the girl's dormitory. He returned seconds later, Eliza following him.

"Is it still there, Glen?" Dumbledore asked.

"It's there," Neptune said before Harry could translate Glen's answer. "Same enchantment,"

Dumbledore nodded. "Miss Snape, if you could follow me, please?"

Eliza glared at Harry, Ron and Draco before following Dumbledore out of the common room and into a spare classroom. The three boys followed.

Dumbledore started an incantation. Eliza gritted her teeth and moaned. Dumbledore stopped immediately.

"Do you know what it is?" Draco asked.

"Yes, Mister Malfoy," Dumbledore said, standing up. "The imperius curse..."

Harry swallowed. Who would have put the imperius curse on Eliza? The punishment for that was a life sentence in Azkaban...

"Can you take it off?" Draco asked.

"Yes," Dumbledore looked worried. "But it is a very difficult, very slow spell. If you could fetch Professors Flitwick, McGonagall, and Snape, I would appreciate it."

"I'll take Snape," Draco said at once.

"I've got McGonagall," Harry announced.

"Flitwick," Ron said. "Got it,"

All three ran out the door.

* * *

Diawna scribbled a bit more on her paper, trying to map out the most dramatic way for her sister's death.

Then she felt it. Like loosing her grip on water.

Someone, perhaps Eliza, perhaps someone else, was breaking the imperius curse. Diawna swore softly and crumpled her paper.

The spell dissolved instantly. Diawna had no control over her sister.
And Eliza knew everything...

* * *

Told by Ron Weasley

As soon as the spell had vanished, Eliza collapsed on the floor. Draco almost fainted with relief. I considered saying something rude to him, then decided against it. Draco didn't really like Eliza. He was just pulling some joke or another, and Eliza had fallen for it.

"Are you alright, Eliza?" Draco asked, kneeling down beside her. I glared at him. He didn't notice.

Eliza shook her head. "I'll tell you..." she whispered.

The rattlesnake, Glen, slithered out of Harry's bag and looked at her.

Glen hissed something. Eliza shook her head and hissed something back.

"She said she'll explain everything," Neptune said. I grinned. I really liked Neptune.

Eliza nodded and sat down on a chair by the wall. "I'll explain everything," she repeated.

"Who cursed you?" Draco asked at once.

"Diawna, my twin," Eliza said. Snape stared at her.

"But... Diawna... she's in America, at school..." he said weakly.

Eliza looked up at Professor Snape. Her father stared at her. Did Snape look afraid? I couldn't tell. "Not anymore," she said. "The prophecy..."

"What prophecy?" Harry asked.

Professor Snape answered. "My wife is a seer. Very talented in divination. The prophecy is the reason I left the service of you-kno... of Voldemort," Snape took a deep breath. "One twin will be Voldemort's chosen heir, the other will die before she turns sixteen. One soul shall perish in agony, and the other will live happily ever after,"

Eliza nodded. "My mother is Voldemort's daughter." Everyone in the room except for Snape, Eliza, and Dumbledore turned white. "Diawna and I are both heirs... but there is only going to be one chosen heir. My mother lived exactly as Voldemort alias Tom Riddle liked. When she left the school, she had her name changed to Lady Dredolreis, although she was rather secretive with that name. She used the same method her father used. Deloris Amay Riddle, when you move the letters around a bit, becomes 'I am Lady Dredolreis'.

Voldemort said he would acknowledge her when she had abandoned the name of 'Riddle'." Eliza paused. "I didn't want to tell you..."

I stared at Eliza, horror struck. "So that's why you're a parselmouth..."

"No!" Eliza whipped her head around to face me. "The gift of speaking parseltongue is only given to those who are destined to be great, evil wizards. I'm a parselmouth because my sister is a parselmouth. We're identical twins, with the exact same powers. Harry is a parselmouth because Voldemort gave him that gift the night he tried to kill him."

I fell silent. Draco glared at me. I glared back.

"Diawna and I were raised to become little dark witches from the start. The reason I'm so good at schoolwork is because... well, I already know everything. I can work almost every dark spell there is. I... I liked it for a while. I loved the dark arts. Until I turned twelve. Then everything changed."

Eliza took a deep breath. "I went to a muggle library on accident. I scanned through the shelves in the children's section, partly because I was bored out of my wits. I started picking up muggle fiction stories.

"My mother had never told me that books could hold such wonderful things! I thought that books were a gate to power, nothing more. I learned so much... I... I realized that I was way offline. I stopped learning the dark arts. My mother was furious. I didn't care. I kept going to that library... I especially liked the muggle fantasies... but I didn't care what I read. They were books, filled with strange concepts and ideas. I read fiction, non-fiction, autobiographies, history, muggle science.

"It was then my mother realized what was happening. She stopped teaching me. I suppose she would have killed me right there and then, if she wasn't so obsessed with using people. I thought she had sent me here to get away from the death threats I kept getting at Weavers. I was wrong. She sent me here to kill me. The reason for that, I don't know."

Harry, Draco, and I stared open mouthed at Eliza. Professors McGonagall, Snape, and Flitwick looked very white. Dumbledore wore a somber expression.

"Why did Diawna put the imperius curse on you?" McGonagall asked.

"She wanted me to stay alive. She said they were planning another attack over the Easter holidays, and if I survived this raid that my mother would be demoted, possibly killed. Diawna would be second in command if that happened. Voldemort's chosen heir." Eliza sneered. "You see, that's why I haven't killed her already. She's not the heir yet, and if she were to die..."

"That would leave you to fill in her place," Draco finished.

Eliza nodded. "Exactly. And I will not be Voldemort's heir."

There was an unnerving silence following this statement. Finally, McGonagall said, "Divination is a very difficult branch of magic..."

"My wife is never wrong," Snape growled. "I'll give her credit for that, at least. That's one of the reasons I was so angry. She threatened to kill one of them if I didn't stay loyal to you-know... Voldemort. I betrayed her anyway. She didn't find out until years later."

I swallowed, remembering what Harry had told me Dumbledore had said last year. "...he rejoined our side before Lord Voldemort's downfall and turned spy for us, at great personal risk..."

It all seemed to make sense now... except...

"Eliza, why are they so keen on killing you in particular?" I asked.

Eliza shook her head and covered her face with her hands. "I don't know, Ron... I honestly don't know..."

Chapter Twenty One

Hermione returned to school two days later, and was furious that Harry and Ron haven't written to her to tell her what's been going on.

"You could have sent a note! Dear Hermione, your friend Eliza has been found under the imperius curse, and oh, by the way, she's also you-know-who's granddaughter. Love, Harry. It's not that hard!" Hermione fumed.

Harry, Ron, and Draco looked at each other guiltily. Draco laughing softly.

"What else has been going on?!" Hermione asked.

"Well, Harry and I took a little trip down to the chamber of secrets..." Draco said.

Hermione stared at him.

"We found a whole lot of snakes." Harry remarked helpfully. "Eliza's snake, Slyther, was part of the council."

"Eliza's snake?" Neptune appeared out of Draco's pocket. "Slyther never said he was a pet! He's too good to be a pet! He's a special breed! He's a Denpert!" Neptune started laughing. "Oh, I'm never going to let him forget this!"

Hermione stared at Neptune, then back at Ron, Draco, and Harry. "Explain," she said, weakly.

Draco, Harry, and Ron all launched into a highly dramatical version of what's been happening over winter break.

Hermione listened with obvious skepticism. Neptune started laughing out loud at some of their descriptions.

"What?!" Ron asked.

"You did not have to fight your way through scores of deadly snakes to get to the chamber of secrets. Honestly, Ron. You didn't even come." Neptune giggled.

Ron's ears turned red.

Hermione laughed. "Oh, by the way, my sister has been trying to turn me into a normal teenager. She went to America as an exchange student, and look what she got me."

Hermione reached into her pockets and brought out a CD player, and at least twelve CDs.

"What are those?" Ron asked. Draco looked just as confused.

"Really cheep CD's that my sister picked up in America, as well as a few nicer ones." Hermione said, showing them to Ron.

"Music player," Harry clarified, then frowned. "Hermione, I thought you said that electronic things don't work here, that there's too much magic in the air."

Hermione grinned. "I fixed them. They run on magic now."

Draco shook his head. "Muggle American music. Gag. I can't take it. The tackiness is killing me. Someone Avada Kedavra me before I go insane."

"Ok," Ron grinned and raised his wand.

"I didn't mean that!" Draco said quickly, shooting Ron a dirty look.

Ron looked disappointed and put his wand back in his pocket.

* * *

Wyrren Malfoy walked through the halls irritably. That had to be the worst Potions class she had yet taken. Suddenly she crashed into somebody headlong.

"Watch where you're going!" she sneered at the figure.

Nearly Headless Nick picked himself off of the floor and gaped at Wyrren. "You knocked me over,"

"Yes, I knocked you over. Now beat it." Wyrren snapped, turning away. Abruptly, she turned back around and stared at Nearly Headless Nick. "How... how could I have knocked you over... you're a ghost..."

Students were whispering around her, looking dubiously at Wyrren. One student swiped a hand at Nearly Headless Nick.

It went through as if he wasn't there.

Wyrren's face went blank again. She took three steps forward, and tried to swipe her hand through, like the other student had done.

Nearly Headless Nick felt solid...

Wyrren's face didn't even change as she whirled around and marched down the hall on the way to charms.

* * *

"Well, James, you were right," Wyrren sighed as she sat down on her bed. A first year girl named Merii raised her eyebrows.

"Talking to yourself again, Malfoy?" she asked.

Wyrren turned her head slowly towards Merii. "Perhaps, Merii. Perhaps,"

Merii shivered. There was something about Wyrren that was... well... creepy. She left the room.

James laughed. "You know, I heard that a dark messenger could make non-ghosts visible to other people."

Wyrren laughed as well. "I'd be a fourth year before I managed anything like that!"

"I also heard that dark messengers could talk to ghosts so that no body living can hear them," James said.

Wyrren smirked. "Wouldn't that be nice? I'd loose my reputation for being a rambling weirdo."

Lily floated through the wall. "Back! Your turn, James."

"What's going on, Lily?" Wyrren asked.

"Oh, the usual, kill Eliza Snape, Severus, take over Hogwarts." Lily said. "The only thing that surprised me is that Eliza, or someone who looks just like her, was standing there right next to Voldemort. Eliza doesn't happen to have a twin who likes to play hooky, does she?"

Wyrren frowned. "I can ask. Anything else?"

Lily nodded. "Besides that I also witnessed the execution of Lady Dredolreis, alias Deloris Amay Riddle."

* * *

Wyrren ran down the stairs of the girl's dormitory. "Harry, Ron, Hermione, and Eliza, I need to speak with you,"

Harry jerked his head to an empty corner of the room. Ron, Eliza, and Hermione nodded and sat down. Wyrren followed.

"Eliza, you don't happen to have a twin sister, do you?" Wyrren asked.

Eliza nodded. "Diawna Eliza Snape,"

Wyrren turned to look at the empty space in front of her. "Ok, first off, Lily wants me to tell you that Voldemort killed Lady Dredolreis."

"What?!" Eliza sat upright.

Harry frowned. "I thought Lady Dredolreis was second in command. Who's in charge, now?"

"Eliza's twin, apparently. Either that, or someone's been taking a polyjuice potion," Wyrren said. "I'm quoting Lily word for word, by the way. What's a polyjuice potion?"

"It's a potion that makes..." Hermione started saying.

Wyrren motioned for silence. "I see,"

"Well, I guess the prophecy was right," Eliza said. "Diawna's Voldemort's chosen heir. My birthday is on the first of June,"

Hermione rolled her eyes. "Honestly, at that rate you're going to be killing yourself just to make it seem true. Think about how many times Professor Trelawny's messed up her predictions."

"Lady Dredolreis doesn't... well... she didn't mess up any of her predictions." Eliza said.

"Look who's being paranoid!" Hermione rolled her eyes. "If you're trying to find an excuse to think you're going to be killed, fine with me, Eliza."

Eliza sneered, looking so much like Professor Snape it was scary. "Fine, Hermione. Laugh at me, why don't you?" She stood up and ran to her dormitory.

"Why did it take us months and Draco's help to realize that Snape and Eliza are related?" Hermione asked, glaring at the staircase Eliza had vanished up. "Why? Stuck up, snobby..."

"Hermione, shut up." Ron glared at her. "What's your problem, anyhow?"

"She seems to think that we should be oh so terrified out of our wits of some stupid prophecy spoken fifteen years ago. And when we're not, she thinks she has the right to sneer at us for it." Hermione crossed her arms. "Why does it concern you, anyhow? Going to go see your dear friend Draco and tell him we're oh so mean?"

"Hermione..." Harry started.

"What?" Hermione snapped, picking up one of her books.

"Nothing," Harry said. Ron motioned for the boy's dormitory stairs. Harry nodded and walked away from Hermione.

"Dear Hermione, your friend Eliza is the granddaughter of the most evil wizard in the world. Love, Harry." Hermione muttered under her breath. "It's not much to ask, is it?"

"No," Lily whispered.

"They could have written me. Anything. But no, they go have fun with Draco Malfoy." Hermione glared at her book.

"You'll regret that, Hermione," Lily said, looking sad. "Trust me, you'll regret that."

Hermione didn't hear. She just snapped her book shut and stormed off into the hallways, away from the Gryffindor tower.

Lily shook her head, then left to watch over Harry.

* * *

Diawna watched the castle. A figure was striding out into the moonlight, a girl, by her long, brown hair.

“Hermione!” Diawna whispered.

“Eliza?” Hermione crossed her arms. “How did you get here?”

Diawna stepped out in the moonlight. “It doesn’t matter. Quickly! I need to talk to you. It’s important!”

The black dog raced forward.

Hermione sneered and crossed her arms. “Still going on about that blasted prophecy, Eliza?”

Diawna shook her head. “No, nothing like that! I need to speak with you, this has nothing to do with the prophecy!” Closer... closer Hermione... just a bit closer...

The black dog sprinted even faster towards them.

Hermione shrugged, and walked forward, towards Diawna. “What is it?”

Diawna opened her mouth, as if she was about to say something difficult.

“What is it?” Hermione walked closer still.

The dog was so close... faster! He screamed at himself.

Diawna flashed a wicked grin. “Imper- Ahhhh!”

The dog launched himself at Diawna. Hermione drew out her wand. “Sirius! What...”

Diawna raised her wand and shot a bolt of fire at the dog. Sirius ran towards Hermione.

“Diawna!” Hermione stumbled back and ran.

“I’ll kill you for that!” Diawna screamed after them. “You hear me Hermione? I’ll kill you!” Diawna turned back, ran into the forest, and vanished.

Hermione didn’t stop until she was inside of the castle. Sirius came inside with her. “Sirius! How... how...”

Sirius changed into his human form. “I was... patrolling. I do that every night, ever since the attack. That girl... I knew that wasn’t your friend Eliza, she smelled nothing like Eliza.” Sirius shook his head. “Let’s just say I put two and two together. What was that, polyjuice potion? She smelled like a death eater.”

“That was Diawna, Eliza’s twin,” Hermione shook her head. “She was trying to put me under the imperius curse, wasn’t she? Just like she put Eliza under the imperius curse?”

Sirius nodded.

@

Professor McGonagall walked into the hall. “Miss Granger! What on earth are you doing out of... oh. Hello, Sirius,”

Sirius nodded. “Diawna’s been trying to put illegal curses on students again.”

Professor McGonagall’s face turned white. “What happened?”

Hermione leaned against the wall. “She pretended to be Eliza. As soon as I was in striking range she tried to put me under the imperius curse. Sirius jumped on her.”

Professor McGonagall bit her lip. “I see. Miss Granger, back to your dormitory. Sirius, I want to see you for a moment,”

“Yes, Minerva,” Sirius nodded to Hermione. Hermione walked up the staircase in the direction of the Gryffindor tower.

“And I thought Eliza was just being paranoid...” Hermione muttered.

Chapter Twenty Two

Draco leaned over his sketchpad. Crabbe, Goyle, and all the other Slytherin fifth years were all asleep. He examined it in the moonlight.

It was a perfect picture of Eliza, drawn in charcoal. Somehow, Draco’s drawings had gotten at least twice as good since Eliza started helping him out, getting those art books for him and everything... Draco shook his head.

If only he could go out and tell Eliza what she meant to him... Draco winced. She’d laugh at him... or get embarrassed. No way.

Draco looked over his picture. Perhaps he could send it to her... with a poem or something. Eliza would love that...

Draco groaned. “What a brilliant idea. Heck, I can’t write poetry if my life depended on it.” He thought briefly of the time Ginny had sent Harry a singing valentine, and winced. Funny as it had been, that’s about as good as his poetry got as well.

How about song lyrics? Draco considered. Those had possibilities. Except Eliza would recognize any song from the wizarding world, wouldn’t she? It wouldn’t mean as much...

“I love you, Eliza,” Draco whispered. That was easy. He’d loved her ever since the winter ball. Now, how to show her that, that was a different matter.

“I love you, Eliza,”

* * *

“Back to the story,” Harry said. “Come on, Eliza, this is getting interesting...”

Eliza sighed and shook her head. Ron, Hermione, Harry, and Draco looked up at her hopefully. Draco started making puppy eyes. “Alright... where did I leave off?”

“Snape swore he was going to beat Potter at schoolwork,” Draco said at once.

“Oh... right...” Eliza shook her head. “Sorry, my brain has left for the day...”

Severus fidgeted with his prefect badge. He was a fifth year now, watching Lupin once again steel off towards the whomping willow.

Ryan Lestrange shook his head. “You’re still obsessed with getting Potter expelled, aren’t you? Forget it! He’s top of almost every class.”

Severus shook his head. “I have an idea. Why don’t you go find Jaklin and leave me alone? I’ve got work to do,”

“Still trying to make that Gryffindor fall for you?”

“What?”

“That redhead that you stare at during transfiguration... what’s her name... Rose? Daisy? I know it was some flower or another... Tulip? Is that a name?” Ryan frowned. “Iris... Pansy... Petunia... I know her name, it’s on the tip of my tongue...”

“Lily,”

Ryan smirked. “See?”

Severus rolled his eyes. “So I know her name. That doesn’t prove anything,”

“Have it your way, Curse Master Snape.” Ryan shrugged and walked away.

“Hey, Snape!” Severus turned. Sirius Black was walking towards him, smirking.

“What do you want, Black?” Severus asked.

“You haven’t figured out how to get into that tree yet, have you?” Sirius asked.

“Why? You know how?” Severus put his hand near his wand.

“I found out when I was a first year,” Sirius smirked. “It’s easy,”

“Yeah, right,” Severus rolled his eyes.

“I do,” Sirius insisted.

“Prove it,” Severus snapped.

“There’s a knot on the tree right next to the roots. All you have to do is press it with a branch, and you’ll be able to follow Remus,” Sirius smirked.

“Thanks,” Severus turned and walked toward the front door.

"Wait a minute! You're not actually going to try and go after him?"

"Stop me," Severus pulled out his wand.

Sirius backed up, feeling his pockets for his wand. Laughing, Severus ran towards the whomping willow.

"What?!" James' voice sounded through the hall. Severus ran faster. "Snape!"

Severus ran out of the entrance hall doors, jumped several stairs and sprinted across the lawn. He looked around once he reached the whomping willow. Sure enough, a branch was lying there, right next to the tree. He grabbed it and prodded the knot next to the ground.

The branches stopped moving. Glancing back once, he slid into a gap in the roots.

It was pitch black inside. It seemed to be a kind of tunnel. "Lumos," Severus whispered.

"Snape, wait!" James yelled.

Severus smirked and ran towards the end of the tunnel.

Ten minutes later, Severus was starting to wonder if this tunnel would ever end. A few more minutes later he started walking along a set of stairs.

The sound of galloping hooves echoed through the tunnel. Severus ignored it and kept climbing.

"Snape! Don't go any farther!" James scrambled up the stairs. "Trust me, Snape! Don't!"

"Like I'm going to trust you, Potter," Snape muttered to himself. The end of the staircase was so near...

A wild, ugly scream of pain tore through the silence. Severus paused for a moment, wondering if James was right, then hurried on.

There! Severus paused panting in front of a door. Lifting one shaking hand, he unlocked the bolts and opened it.

"No!" James yelled.

A wolf, a snarling, bloodthirsty werewolf stood right in front of Severus. It sprang forward.

James dove and tackled the wolf, driving it back. The wolf snapped at him viciously, almost biting his head off.

Snape drew out his wand. "Stupefy!" he shouted, pointing his wand at the werewolf. It froze... for a moment, then got back to its feet.

It was long enough. James ran back to the door and slammed it shut.

James and Severus stood panting there for a moment, both their faces dead white.

"Oh, real funny, Potter. You're trying to murder me now?" Severus sneered.

“Me?!” James stood bolt upright. “I just saved your life, Snape!” His messy black hair stood up on end. He fingered his glasses angrily.

“If it weren’t for you, Black, and Lupin I wouldn’t have needed saving, would I?”

“Me?! I had nothing to do with that, and neither did Remus!” James glared at Severus, then walked back down the tunnel. “Maybe I should have let Remus eat you!”

Severus glared at James, glanced back at the door, where the angry howls still sounded, and hurried back towards Hogwarts.

“Professor, I...” Severus started.

“Mister Snape?” Dumbledore crossed his arms. “I’ve heard James already.”

Severus crossed his arms and sneered. “Black tried to murder me,”

“He will be punished. As for you, Mister Snape, you are to tell no one what happened, on threat of being expelled. Have I made myself clear?”

“Isn’t Black getting expelled?!” Severus gritted his teeth. “And Remus?”

“Remus had nothing to do with that, Mister Snape.” Dumbledore said evenly. “Have I made myself clear?”

“Yes, sir,” Severus sneered, and stormed out of the room. Fine. Sirius and Remus tried to murder him, and Black doesn’t even get expelled. Lupin doesn’t even get punished. And, for doing nothing against the rules, he, Severus, is threatened to be expelled.

James watched Severus pass. Severus didn’t look at him. “I swear I’ll pay you back, James,” he muttered to himself. As much as he didn’t like to admit it, even to himself, James just saved his skin. “I hate you, Potter,”

“Yes, I know, Snape,” James sighed. “I know,”

“And?” Draco asked.

“And it’s almost time for the library to close,” Eliza said, standing up. “I’ll tell you the rest later.”

Harry, Draco, Ron, and Hermione sighed with disappointment, then followed Eliza out of the library.

* * *

“He does not,” Ron said stiffly.

“He does so,” Eliza snapped.

“He does not,” Ron repeated.

“He does so,” Eliza snapped again.

"Look, Eliza, if Draco is pulling anything more than a cruel joke I'll... I'll never say another word against Malfoy as long as I live." Ron folded his arms.

"Good. Now start practicing." Eliza snapped again.

"Has Draco even kissed you?" Ron asked. Eliza felt like taking a swipe at him or something of that nature.

"No, Ron," she said. They were walking down to breakfast and bickering the whole way.

"Well then," Ron said.

"Then why did Draco apologize to you in front of the whole potions class for making fun of you?" Eliza asked.

Ron's face darkened. "I don't believe that was Draco Malfoy. That was Fred or George who have finally gotten their hands on some polyjuice potion."

"Was not," Eliza crossed her arms.

"Was so," Ron shot back.

"Was not,"

"Was so,"

"Was not,"

"Eliza?" Hermione was waiting for them at the entrance of the dinning hall. "Why are you and Ron arguing like seven year old brats?"

"Was so," Ron whispered.

Eliza stuck her tongue at Ron.

"Eliza!" Hermione shook her head. "Please act your age,"

"Eliza, after classes, you want to play chess?" Ron asked.

Eliza scowled. "To this date you have beaten me seventy nine times, Ron. I have beaten you once. I'm not feeling like totally embarrassing myself by making it a round eighty, thank you very much,"

Ron smiled, then stopped grinning slowly. "I swear, Eliza, if you keep seeing Draco Malfoy, that will be the biggest mistake of your life. Trust me! I've known him for years!" Ron looked deadly serious.

"Well," Eliza said, looking just as serious. "That will be a chance I'll have to take, then, won't it?"

Ron shook his head, and stalked off. Eliza turned to Hermione. "Did I say something wrong?"

Hermione sighed. "Frankly, Eliza, I agree with Ron. Draco may be acting sweet, but really, he's a jerk!"

Eliza sneered again. Hermione was once more struck by how much she looked like her father when she did that. "Fine, then. Have it your way,"

Eliza turned around, and marched off out of the dinning hall.

* * *

Told by Harry Potter

I woke up at two in the morning with my scar burning like fire. I yelped and jumped out of bed.

No one else in our dormitory had moved, but distant shouts echoed through the walls.

“ALL STUDENTS!” Professor McGonagall’s voice seemed louder than a howler. “ALL STUDENTS FIFTH YEAR AND OVER: DRESS AND COME TO THE MAIN HALL NOW! ALL STUDENTS BELOW FIFTH YEAR, GET DRESSED AND PREPARE TO EVACUATE! NOW!”

I closed my eyes and pressed my fingers against my scar. The pain was still there.

“Wha? What’s going on?” Ron asked, shaking his head.

“Another attack, Ron. Get dressed, we’re to get to the main hall as quickly as we can,” I said. Neville, Seamus, and Dean were scrambling with their robes. I got dressed and ran down the stairs, Ron at my heals.

The room was in chaos. Hermione and Eliza were waiting beside the portrait hole with a group of fifth, sixth, and seventh years, their wands clasped firmly in their hands. Wyrren Malfoy was sitting on the ground beside them, her eyes closed. She appeared to be chanting something.

“Let’s go,” I said, and opened the portrait hole. The other students followed me as I ran towards the battle.

* * *

Eliza, Hermione, and Harry ended up fighting in the same dark corridor in the dungeons. Three death eaters approached slowly, shooting spell after spell off, only to be struck by the counter curse.

“There’s got to be a better way...” Eliza muttered, trying to think of another spell.

“Not likely,” Harry muttered, throwing out a curse.

One of the death eaters in the lead shrieked “Expelliarmus!” Harry’s wand went flying.

“Harry, my wand!” Eliza shoved her wand into Harry’s hand. Harry swung it around just in time to stop from being cursed.

“Why aren’t they using avada kedavra?” Hermione asked.

“Too much energy. Can’t use avada kedavra in a raid!” Eliza shouted. “Trust me, I should know, I must have cast it dozens of times,” Hermione shuddered.

Eliza's wand slipped out of Harry's hand. Harry looked up at the death eater, who was swinging his wand around.

A boy jumped up and hit the death eater with a jet of golden light. The death eater stumbled back unconscious, his wand falling out of his hand.

Harry, Hermione, and Eliza turned around and stared at the boy.

Neville Longbottom stood there, his round face creased into a big smile. "I did it!" he squealed, then ran back the way he came.

Harry retrieved his and Eliza's wand. "Was that Neville, or was I dreaming?"

"That was Neville," Hermione nodded, looking mystified.

More death eaters poured into the hall. Harry, Eliza, and Hermione retreated, letting the darkness hide them. "They must have figured out that we were here," Harry muttered quietly. "We can't fight all those!"

"What choice do we have?" Eliza whispered. "Light a fire and summon some floo powder?"

"Eliza, if we try to take on all those death eaters, we'll be dead before you can blink." Hermione whispered back.

The death eaters started marching forward. Hermione winced, wishing that she had learned an invisibility charm... something...

Then they heard it. A ghostly, singing voice echoed through the hallways. Wyrren appeared.

But there was something about her that didn't seem like Wyrren. She had an aura of great power about her. The halls all around her were lit with a white light, as if Wyrren was a star. Forms of ghosts that weren't really clear enough to be true ghosts flickered in and out of the light about Wyrren. Her golden white hair gleamed, and there was fire burning in her blue eyes. She held her head high as she passed by Harry, Eliza, and Hermione, not even noticing them. The death eaters were held spell bound by the very feeling of great and ancient power around her.

Harry had once faced a mountain troll, a horde of dementors, a basilisk, and a huge dragon. He had dueled with Lord Voldemort, and survived encounter after encounter with the dark lord.

So why was it Harry would rather face them all over again, rather than be the enemy of Wyrren Malfoy, a small, pale first year?

Suddenly, Wyrren's song changed pitch, becoming ghostlike and cruel. The death eaters began to scream. The ones closest to Wyrren writhed on the ground in agony.

Faster and faster, the spirits in Wyrren's white light flickered in and out of view. Finally, Harry found himself staring at two ghosts on the very edge of the light.

One was a man, very tall, with messy hair and round glasses. The other was a pretty young woman with long, sweeping hair. Their eyes shone with a strange combination of concern, sorrow, and pride.

“Mum?” Harry whispered. “Dad?”

The woman nodded. The death eaters continued to scream, and Wyrren kept on singing, but the light around Wyrren was fading.

Then, all at once, the light collapsed. The images of Lily and James vanished, along with all the other semi ghosts. Wyrren crumpled and fell to the ground.

“Wyrren!” Harry rushed towards her and grabbed her wrist to feel her pulse. He couldn’t feel a thing.

“Harry, she’s dying!” Hermione pushed Harry out of the way and started a chant. Taking her wand, she positioned it between herself and Wyrren.

A blue light that looked like electricity zapped from Hermione to the wand, then from the wand to Wyrren. Hermione kept on chanting.

After a few minutes, Hermione collapsed. The chanting stopped, and Wyrren didn’t move.

“What... what did she do?” Harry asked.

Eliza closed her eyes. “A... a life giving charm. Wyrren drained her life force to summon up all that power. Hermione... transferred some of her life force to Wyrren.” Eliza was shaking. “I’ve heard of it. Really risky thing to do, because if your life force isn’t enough to keep the person alive, you die too.”

“But... Hermione... she...”

“She’ll live,” Eliza said.

Harry suddenly remembered why they were in the hall in the first place. “The death eaters!” he spun around.

“What death eaters?” Eliza asked.

Harry stared down the hall. “Lumos,” he whispered.

The four death eaters nearest Wyrren were dead. Five others were unconscious. The rest of them were on the ground moaning with pain.

“Wyrren killed them?” Harry asked, staring at the motionless figure of a frail eleven year old girl.

Eliza nodded. “Yes, it was Wyrren. Wyrren killed them.”

Harry leaned against the wall, suddenly more tired than he could have believed possible. “Is the battle over?”

“I think so,”

Harry leaned down over Hermione. “Mobilicorpus,” he whispered. Hermione rose in the air. Eliza did the same to Wyrren, and they made their way to the hospital wing.

Chapter Twenty Three

No students had been killed during the battle. Wyrren had recovered after four days of sleeping in the hospital wing. The only death eaters that had been killed or captured were the ones that Wyrren had taken down with her ghosts and her song charm.

“Wyrren?” Harry poked his head inside the hospital wing. Wyrren was lying on the bed, her eyes barely open.

“Four of them, Harry Potter. I killed four death eaters with a single spell, and had made possible the capture of eight others.” Wyrren’s tone was flat and emotionless. “I saved the lives of five students, besides that. Dumbledore himself told me I would be receiving an award for special services to the school, and I won one hundred points for Gryffindor.

“Somehow, I managed that spell without killing myself,” Wyrren closed her eyes. “That’s the only part I can’t explain,”

“You... you expected to die when you started that spell?” Harry frowned.

“To this date, only two other necromancers have performed that spell and lived. It’s a power spell. I called on every ghost, shade, wraith, and spirit for miles around for an ancient power, then used it to amplify my song charm. Song charms can kill, you know.” Wyrren opened her eyes and stared at Harry.

“I saw my mum and dad when you did that,” Harry said.

Wyrren smiled a bit. “Your mum was the one who taught me that song charm. They’ve been spying on Voldemort on and off, bringing me information for months now.”

“Why did you cast that spell if you knew it would kill you?” Harry asked.

“I didn’t know it would kill me, I knew it could,” Wyrren said slowly, mimicking Draco’s lazy drawl. “there is a difference. And it was worthwhile, wasn’t it? I saved the great Harry Potter and Eliza Snape, two of the death eater’s biggest targets,”

“When do you think you can go back to class?” Harry asked.

“Perhaps tomorrow. Madam Pomfrey keeps saying I need rest, so I’m making real effort to be lazy. By the way, there’s a book I want to study in my dormitory. Will you please ask Hermione to bring it down? It is titled, ‘The Art of the Dark Messenger’.”

Harry nodded and left the room.

James paused before following Harry. “I’ll come back when you’re well,” he muttered, then floated away.

Diawna closed her eyes to keep from trembling. The entire council of death eaters were standing before her. Voldemort growled like an angry snake.

"Four of my servants killed, Diawna. Eight others were captured. You did not manage to kill Eliza, Harry, or Severus, or anyone else. Explain!" he stopped and stood before her, his arms crossed, his red eyes flashing.

"The lives of Harry Potter and Eliza Snape were saved by a necromancer, who called on the ancient power for her song charm." Diawna opened her eyes. "I was not prepared to deal with a trained necromancer and song charmer,"

Instead of being angry though, Voldemort's eyes gleamed hungrily, and he smiled. "A trained necromancer lives in Hogwarts?"

Diawna nodded.

"Who is she?"

"A young girl, perhaps a first or second year, with pallid golden hair and a pale, pointed face. I don't know who she is,"

"Wyrren?" Lucius Malfoy removed his mask and moved to the front of the crowd. "My daughter?"

"You have trained both of your children in the dark arts, have you not, Lucius?" Voldemort asked.

Lucius trembled. "I have never trained Wyrren, my lord. She... has no patience for the dark arts, for quidditch, or anything else of that nature. All she wanted was to sit in the graveyards around our house for ours, saying she can see ghosts that weren't really there. I have tried, my lord..."

"Crucio!" Voldemort flicked his wand at Lucius. Lucius fell to the ground and screamed. Voldemort watched for a few moments then removed the curse. Lucius was still twitching in pain. "You fool!" Voldemort snarled. "Do you mean to tell me that you had a necromancer in your home for eleven years and never put her to use?! That you never trained her?! That you never even recognized her powers?!"

Lucius whimpered.

"We might have ruled the world by now, you fool! Do you know how powerful necromancers can be when their powers are combined with the dark arts?!"

Lucius, trembling, got back to his feet.

Voldemort whirled around. "Diawna, second in command, I want you to capture this necromancer and bring her to me, no matter the cost,"

Diawna curtsied. "It shall be done, my lord. I will not fail you again,"

Voldemort smiled slightly. "For your sake, Diawna, I should hope not,"

Diawna turned a shade green, nodded, and apparated into the night.

* * *

“What?” Wyrren asked. “What do you mean they’re after me?”

Lily shook her head impatiently. Wyrren was sitting up in her bed at the hospital wing, frowning. “Exactly what I said, Wyrren. I told you your powers will not go unnoticed. You are a necromancer. Diawna has pretty much been told to capture you or die,”

Wyrren fingered a lock of her blonde white hair. “I will not turn to the dark arts,” she said, her face turning robotic-like again.

“I suggest you stay at the school over the summer, in that case.” Lily said dryly, crossing her arms. “I also suggest that you work harder at your studies.”

“I get perfect marks at nearly everything I do, Mrs. Potter,” Wyrren said stiffly. “I study the art of the dark messenger every chance I get,”

“But you don’t practice it! Not like you used to. You used to stretch your powers farther every day!”

“Oh? Think I’m going weak, do you?” Wyrren crossed her arms. “Madam Pomfrey?”

Madam Pomfrey walked into the room. “What is it? Why are you sitting up? You need rest!”

“I want you to tell me if you can see anything in the middle of the room,” Wyrren said.

Lily’s eyes widened. “I didn’t mean...”

“No,” Madam Pomfrey frowned. “Are you seeing hallucinations?”

Wyrren closed her eyes and extended a hand towards Lily, making her more solid, more real, more detailed and colorful than ever before. “Now do you see anything, Madam Pomfrey?”

Madam Pomfrey stared into the middle of the room again. “A... a ghost? But why isn’t it solid, like the other ghosts? Oh my... Lily!”

Lily stared at Wyrren, then turned to Madam Pomfrey, whose eyes had roughly reached the size of tea saucers. Wyrren released her power, and Lily became translucent again.

“That was not a hallucination, Madam Pomfrey,” Wyrren got out of bed. “I would like to leave, now,”

Madam Pomfrey didn’t even argue as Wyrren walked past her. “Don’t underestimate me again, Lily,” she whispered.

* * *

“See? You didn’t die,” Hermione crossed her arms. “I still say that prophecy is a load of rubbish.”

"Then exactly why is a fifteen year old girl second in command to Lord Voldemort?" Eliza shot back, moving her bishop.

"Check mate!" Ron leaned back. "You are getting better, though, Eliza."

"What's the total score?" Eliza asked.

"One hundred sixty seven to one," Ron said. "Play again?"

Eliza shook her head. "I've been humiliated enough for now. Maybe later."

"I still say the prophecy is a load of rubbish." Hermione said stubbornly.

"Have it your way," Eliza said, gathering up her chess set and putting it away. "Anyway, I told Draco that I'd meet him in the library."

Hermione rolled her eyes. Ron didn't say anything. "You're still seeing Draco?"

"I'm not 'seeing' him! Draco's my friend! I wish you would stop harping on that!" Eliza shook her head and marched out of the common room.

"How on earth am I going to drive it into her head that Draco is a jerk?!" Hermione sat down. "Want to play chess, Ron?"

Ron nodded and looked guilty.

"What's with you?" Hermione asked.

"Draco," Ron sighed. "He saved Sirius's life back there,"

Hermione stared at him. "What?"

"He kept a group of seventh years from cursing him," Ron stared gloomily at the chess set. "Sirius was there, too, fighting the death eaters. A bunch of seventh years saw him and lost their heads. Draco disarmed them and pointed out that Sirius was FIGHTING the death eaters."

Hermione stared at Ron. "He did?"

Ron nodded. "Your turn,"

Hermione didn't move. "Draco was actually fighting on OUR side?"

Ron closed his eyes and sighed. "Yes, Hermione. He seems to think they're the enemy, ever since his sister told them they were trying to kill Eliza,"

Hermione frowned and turned her attention back to the chess board.

* * *

Draco had been waiting at the library for Eliza for five minutes when Eliza stormed in, her hands clenched into fists.

"What is it?" Draco asked.

"What? Oh... Hermione and I had a fight." Eliza crossed her arms.

Draco opened his mouth to say how Hermione was just a worthless mudblood anyway, then closed it, realizing that the comment would not be appreciated. "I've been working on a new painting. Do you want to come see it?"

Eliza smiled and nodded. "Are you ever going to bring the other one to life?"

Draco made a face of great reluctance. "I don't know... its not that good..."

"How about this. You take it, hang it up in the hallways. No one will know you painted it," Eliza glanced over at Draco, who appeared to be considering it.

"Alright... but at night, ok? I just hope no one catches us... it's times like this I wish my father would lend me his invisibility cloak..."

"Your father has an invisibility cloak?" Eliza asked, thinking of Harry's cloak.

Draco nodded. "Not that it's ever done me any good. Father set up a 'touch and die' rule about it. I've never tested it before,"

Eliza grinned. "How about early morning? We're allowed to get up at six... no one else gets up that early..."

Draco smirked. "Alright. Come on, though, I still want to show you my new painting."

Chapter Twenty Four

"Harry?" someone was whispering to him. Harry tossed and turned in his sheets, dreaming.

"Harry, wake up,"

Harry opened one eye. It was still dark out. "Who's there?" he muttered.

"Get dressed and come down to the common room. I need to show you something." The voice was faint and distant, although it sounded oddly familiar.

"I'm coming..." Harry got up and put his robes on. "Where are you?"

"You can't see me. Come down to the common room."

Harry glanced around once more. "Dad?" he whispered. Stupid thing to think, really, but it sounded like him...

The voice laughed. "Right on the money. Come on. Oh, and grab your cloak. You'll probably need it with Filch hanging around."

Harry grabbed his invisibility cloak and ran down to the common room. "What did Wyrren do now?"

The voice laughed again. "Put on the cloak, walk down the passage. I'll explain,"

Harry looked around once more, put on his cloak, and exited through the portrait hole. "What did Wyrren do now?" he repeated.

"She's trying out her powers. She read about some voice booster spirit charm in that book of hers and decided to test it out. Sorry you can't see me. She wanted to attach another charm, but I told her that she'd end up in the hospital wing again if she tried it. I wanted to talk to you," James said. "Turn right here,"

Harry was about to ask why on earth his dad was taking him out here when he heard Eliza's voice.

"Done!" she sounded satisfied. Harry crept closer.

"Eliza, I still think..." Draco started.

"What?" came a new, high pitched voice. "What are you moaning about now? I look a lot better than some of these other paintings."

"See? Your own work is arguing against you." Eliza crossed her arms. Harry turned the corner. Draco and Eliza were standing in front of a painting of a lovely girl with black hair.

"Draco PAINTED that?" Harry whispered.

"Eliza's been helping," James whispered back. "I've been keeping track of them."

"Ok, Miranda, remember, if anyone asks, don't tell who put this up or painted this, alright?" Draco asked, glancing up and down the halls.

"Right," the girl in the portrait smiled. "I'll tell the other portraits to do the same. You know they're all watching you?"

Draco and Eliza whirled around.

"Just kidding! You two are SO easy!" Miranda laughed.

"Don't DO that!" Draco put his hand over his face.

Eliza laughed. It wasn't until then that Harry noticed they were holding hands.

"We'd better get going before Hermione realizes I'm not in bed and puts two and two together," Eliza said.

Draco nodded. "I'll see you at breakfast, Eliza,"

Harry sneaked away down the hall. "Why were you showing me this?" he asked.

James sighed. "Your friends have been trying very hard to break Draco and Eliza up. Did you see Draco's face? He loves Eliza... I want you to keep your friends from splitting them up, all right, Harry? Things are going to be bad for Draco... I know, he's going to hate himself soon enough, but still..." James lapsed into silence. "I'm not really supposed to tell you the future. And I've forgotten so much..."

"You know the future?" Harry asked.

"I've seen the future, Harry. Have you ever heard of the watcher?" James asked.

Harry thought hard. "No," he said finally.

"Good. That's a sign I haven't been talking too much. Just... try to be nice to Draco, alright?"

"Say what?" Harry asked. "Draco and I have hated each other since the first day of school!"

"Now why does that sound familiar... let me think..." James's voice was loaded with sarcasm. He grinned even though Harry couldn't see him. "Trust me, Harry."

"Now, let me see... I should trust you, shouldn't I? I get woken up by a voice that says it belongs to my dead father, tells me to come watch my friend Eliza hang out with my worst enemy, then advises me to become friends with Draco Malfoy. Why does this seem a bit wrong?" Harry looked around again, as though expecting to see a glowing outline of James.

James laughed. His voice seemed to be getting fainter. "Trust me,"

Harry made a face, then sighed. "I'll try, ok? I'm not promising anything, though."

"Thank you, Harry." The voice was becoming fainter and fainter.

"Dad? Where are you going? Dad!" Harry looked around.

"We'll talk again..." the voice vanished completely.

Harry stood still for a moment, as though the voice would come back. Then, feeling much more depressed, Harry walked slowly back to his dormitory.

* * *

"James! You... you... blabber!" Lily crossed her arms. "You know we're not supposed to tell the future!"

"I just gave Harry a friendly bit of advise." James said.

"Oh, if I were solid I'd... I'd... throw a pillow at you!" Lily stormed.

James tried hard, and failed to keep a straight face. "Oh no, not the pillow!"

"Wyrren is going to kill you!"

"How would even the great Wyrren do that? I'm already dead!"

"That's not funny, James," Lily scolded. "Honestly!"

"Anyway, my turn at watching the death eaters." James stopped smiling and became serious. "Has anything new been happening?"

Lily shook her head. "Diawna's still coming up with schemes to capture Wyrren. All of them pretty hopeless, but she's bound to come up with a plan sooner or later."

"She always does, and they keep falling in halfway through," James said.

Lily shook her head. "Uh uh uh! Don't even go there. Diawna's smart, and you know it. Underestimate her and the school goes down."

"I know, Lily, I know," James shook his head. "I'd better get going."

"Good luck!" Lily called as James flew away. "You'll need it," she whispered to herself, then waited for Wyrren.

* * *

Draco and Eliza had hung Draco's painting up near the great hall, where three of the four houses would be passing it as they walked by for breakfast. That morning, there seemed to be a lot of interest around the entrance hall.

"What's going on?" Hermione asked.

"I don't know," Harry lied. The painting of Miranda was just coming into view.

"Oh, we got a new painting?" Hermione asked. "That isn't exactly big news... why is everyone stopping?"

Eliza winced. Draco had put a bit too much mischief in Miranda's personality, and now Miranda, Fred, and George were in a spirited conversation on the best ways to cause havoc without actually getting in trouble. Many other students seemed to think that Miranda had some fine ideas, and were hanging around, listening to every word she said.

"Oh, for goodness sakes!" Hermione crossed her arms. Ron stopped to listen to Miranda. "Ron!"

"What is going on here?" Professor McGonagall walked into the entrance hall, and came face to face with Miranda, who started giggling incessantly.

"A new painting has been put up, Professor," squeaked a Hufflepuff second year. "She's great fun, too!"

Professor McGonagall stared at the portrait. "Funny place to put a painting, though. I'll be asking Dumbledore about it,"

Eliza winked at Miranda, who winked back, then walked into the dinning hall.

"Morning, Eliza," Draco walked up to her table. "Mind if I sit down?"

"No problems here," Eliza glanced at Harry, Ron, and Hermione.

Hermione opened her mouth.

"Go right ahead," Harry said, starting on his toast. "If a teacher catches you, I'm not bailing you out, though."

"Fair enough," Draco sat down. "How's Wyrren?"

"Oh, just the same, talking to ghosts, making ghosts solid, that sort of thing," Harry reached for the jam. "She still hasn't joined the land of the living," he motioned to the end of the table, where Wyrren was sitting alone, talking to an empty seat.

Hermione glared at Draco, as though he should know better then to try and sit at the Gryffindor table, and abruptly started dishing herself up. Ron was careful not to look or talk to Draco at all.

"Um... any particular reason you're sitting here, Draco?" Hermione said at last.

"Yes, I would rather not get beaten up by the other Slytherins." Draco pointed over to the Slytherin table, where at least seven people were staring at Draco with 'if looks could kill' expressions on their faces. "They would've knocked me off the quidditch team as well, but I'm team captain, now that Flint is gone,"

Hermione bit her lip, said, "Oh," in a very small voice, and turned back to her breakfast.

"That why you're being nice? No one else to talk to?" Seamus asked.

Shut up, Seamus, Shut up, Harry thought, wincing a bit.

"If you say so," Draco glared at Seamus, then turned back to Eliza. "Did you see that picture in the entrance hall?"

Eliza nodded. "The one who is trying to outdo Fred and George Weasley?"

Harry laughed.

Ron glanced up. "Wonder why they put that up here? They don't get new paintings that often, do they?"

Draco shrugged. "I don't know... I didn't think it was that good,"

Ron rolled his eyes. "It's a lot better then a bunch of the paintings you see around here. What are you aiming for, museum standards?" Ron frowned. Far from telling Draco off, Draco seemed to think this was extravagant praise. His pale, pointed face broke into a smile.

Harry was stunned. Come to think of it, he never really had seen Draco smile...

* * *

Told by Neptune

I had remained in Draco's top pocket for over a month now. He was swell company, and I like being away from the other snakes. The only thing I didn't like was 'Care of Magical Creatures', where the teacher, Hagrid, seemed to be trying to find the most horrifying and deadly animal on the face of the earth. I hated and feared those animals. I think the only reason I went there with Draco at all was because two parselmouths were always there.

Still...

“Neptune!” Draco hissed at me. “Hold still! People are giving me funny looks.”

“People are always giving you funny looks. You’re funny looking. Can’t you skip out on that class?! I can smell the creatures that idiot has this time. Can’t you? Spiked eagles! They eat snakes like me for lunch! Please turn back! Please!” I pleaded. One of the eagles shrieked. I cowered lower in Draco’s pocket.

“Look, Neptune, I’d let you out, but you won’t go...” Draco said.

“I’m safer in here, thanks.” I called. “A snake on the ground near a spiked eagle is a snake with a death wish.”

“Then stop moving. No one’s going to hurt you,”

“I hope not,”

“Glen!” I heard Harry hiss. “Stop moving!”

“Slyther!” Eliza hissed as well.

I poked my head out of my pocket. “Slyther? What are you doing here?”

“We got suckered into the same deal.” Slyther growled. “Eliza, there are spiked eagles over there!”

Eliza sighed. “You won’t get hurt, Slyther!”

“At least you’re a Denpert,” I said, envious. “Wish I was a Denpert now,”

“What’s a Denpert?” Harry asked.

“What ARE you saying?” Hermione asked.

“We’re protesting,” I called to her. “I don’t want to be eaten.” We were getting closer. I stuck my head back inside Draco’s pocket.

“A Denpert,” Slyther said, “is a special wizarding breed of snake. I can cast spells,”

“I thought you knew that, Harry,” Eliza said. “All I ask is that we don’t feed the eagles. That’s all. I don’t think I could do it,”

“Urry up! Got a great lesson planned!” Hagrid’s voice boomed out. I cut a tiny hole in Draco’s pocket. Come to think of it, I never did tell Draco I was deadly poisonous.

Hagrid motioned to the eagles, which were stuck in a great wire cage. I sighed with relief and peaked my head out the top of the pocket. “Hagrid!” I called.

“Eh?” Hagrid turned his enormous head towards Draco. “Oo said that?”

“Me!” I glared at him. “You’re not going to feed those eagles, are you?”

Hagrid stared. Draco glared at me. “Thanks a lot, Neptune.”

“Well...” Hagrid looked back towards the eagles. “I’ll feed ‘em later, on second thought.” Hagrid glanced back at me. I sighed in relief and sat up on

Draco's shoulder. The eagles saw me and hurled themselves against the wire cage.

"Arry! Did you see the paper?" Hagrid reached into his pocket and tossed Harry a paper. Glen and Slyther, apparently realizing that they wouldn't be eaten, rose out of their bags and stared at the paper.

"What does it say?" I asked. It was times like this I really hated being so tiny.

"Sirius Black: Possibly Innocent?" Draco read out loud. Harry repeated this in parseltongue. Harry picked the paper up and stared at it as the rest of the class arrived. "Well?"

"It basically says that Sirius was seen fighting death eaters during the last attack. Last attack?" Harry glanced up. "I thought the ministry was trying to hush the attacks up!"

"Look at the name of the reporter, Harry." Hermione said. "Rita Skeeter. They'll be having a hard time shutting her up."

Draco bit his lip and looked rather guilty. Hermione glared at him briefly then turned back to the paper. "Well, it looks like she learned her lesson, at least. Nice, clean article, for a change." Hermione looked smug.

I glanced back at the eagles. Hagrid was starting to open the cage. I ducked back inside Draco's pocket. This was not going to be fun.

* * *

"Stupid eagles!" Ron exploded as he came in through the common room door.

"Your hand better?" Hermione asked.

"Oh, loads, now that all my fingers are back on. Neptune had a point about those things," Ron said dryly. "Entertainment hour for the Slytherins!"

"Draco wasn't laughing," Eliza said.

Ron didn't say anything.

Slyther was wrapped around Eliza's neck like a scarf. He glanced up at Eliza and laughed. "That boy has a temper,"

"What did he say?" Ron asked, glaring at Slyther.

"Nothing," Eliza and Harry said together.

"Hermione, what are you doing?" Ron asked. Hermione was blocked off from almost the entire common room with stacks upon stacks of books.

"Our OWL's are coming up!" Hermione said, looking scandalized.
"Really! I've been studying for weeks!"

Eliza shrugged. "I hate studying," she admitted. "I think I'm going to procrastinate a little more."

Ron just sighed and massaged his fingers.

Chapter Twenty Five

“More story, please, Eliza,” Ron said. “Come on... you can’t leave us in suspense like this!” Draco, Hermione, and Harry nodded.

Eliza nodded. “Alright... let me think...

Lily Clarke was a little surprised to see two bouquets of flowers on her desk on valentines day, sixth year. One, with pink roses in it, was from James. Lily shot him a shy smile. James grinned mischievously back. The other... the other was lovely and elegant. It held two flowers, a silver rose with gleaming green thorns, and a red and gold day lily.

“Oh...” Lily picked up the card and read it out loud. “Lily, I can’t tell you how much I wish you were mine. Love, your secret admirer.”

Lily whipped her head around to see if any of the other students were looking at her. To her disappointment, they all were. Lily blushed and smelled the day lily. She loved lilies...

Sirius leaned over. “Bet a Slytherin sent you that,” he whispered.

“Why?” Lily frowned and glanced around the class again.

“Because of the rose. I once heard that a silver rose is the Slytherin flower,” Sirius looked strait at Severus, before looking at Ryan, and the other Slytherin boys.

“Maybe...” Lily smiled. “I love roses, anyhow.”

Severus smiled from behind his book, then sighed. What was he thinking?! Now she was going to start envisioning him as some quidditch hero, and she’ll be disappointed when she finds out who really sent her the lily... a Slytherin prefect who can’t stay on a broomstick with slimy looking hair.

Lily turned around and looked straight at Severus, a slight smile on her face.

Severus looked up into her pretty green eyes for about two seconds before ducking back down into his book.

Lily sighed and turned her attentions back on the lesson.

“I can’t believe you sent that to her!” Ryan glared at Severus. “Wait until Jaklin and Lucius find out. They’ll never let you forget it!”

“Oh, perfect head boy Lucius can drop dead for all I care. Jaklin, too, for that matter.” Severus said, leaning over his homework.

"Rose is never going to go for you," Ryan crossed his arms. "And you know that other girl... what's her name... the one who had a huge crush on you..." Ryan frowned.

"Her name is Lily, not Rose," Severus sighed. "And I couldn't care less about Deloris. She may be pretty, but she's a jerk, honestly. I still don't see why Lucius is going out with that Narcissa, he and Deloris are perfect for each other."

Ryan shrugged. "You going to help Tomis on his homework?"

Severus smirked. "I'm not Avery's tutor, he can do his own homework."

"Fine!" Ryan sneered. "Although don't say I didn't warn you about that Gryffindor!" He turned and marched up the staircase.

The start of next year turned out to be Severus' downfall, starting with the train ride there.

Lily Clarke had once again chosen to sit with James. She never did figure out who sent her the lily and the rose last valentines day. Well, she said she didn't. She started to glance at Severus whenever that bouquet was mentioned, but Severus never did summon up the courage to tell her he sent it.

The first thing he saw when Severus got on the train was James, followed by fat boy Pettigrew, Black, and Lupin.

"So, how badly did we beat Slytherin at the house cup last year?" James asked Sirius loudly, playing with his head boy badge. Sirius whispered something to Potter, and he laughed, eyeing Snape.

Severus stared at that badge, his goal, the thing he had worked on getting for years... James had gotten it instead. James always got everything, he was quidditch captain, head boy, very popular, always surrounded by mobs of people.

Now he had even got Lily. Severus' hand edged closer to his wand as Lily put her arm around James's.

Black, Potter, and Lupin smirked at Severus. Pettigrew was looking nervously from Severus' hand to his pocket. It wasn't exactly a secret that Severus was the best with curses in the school. He wasn't called Curse Master Snape for nothing.

Lily raised her eyebrows at Severus. He let go of his wand, turned, and walked away, James's laughter still ringing in his ears.

Things didn't get any better. James was still popular, still quidditch captain, still top of every class, and now he had Lily. James started going everywhere with her, giving her more attention then he gave Sirius, who teased him constantly for it.

Severus passed the time, thinking of Potter dying a slow, painful death. It didn't seem to help though, since every time he thought about it, a picture of James wrestling with a werewolf to save him kept popping into his head.

Ryan Lestrange smirked as Severus stared at James and Lily, strolling across the lawns, talking. "See?"

Severus didn't comment.

"I told you that you'd regret going for that Gryffindor," Ryan said. "I told you! But did you listen to me? No..." Ryan folded his arms. He and Jaklin had started seeing each other lately, and it drove Severus nuts.

Severus still didn't say anything.

"So, what do you think you'll do once you graduate?" Ryan asked. "I was thinking about being a death eater... you know, go around as the dark lord's men, riding around the country... better a victor than a victim, I say."

Severus grinned. "I could do that any day,"

Ryan rolled his eyes. "Of course, great Curse Master Snape, of course you could. I heard Potter was planning on becoming an auror,"

"What?" Severus turned back to Ryan. "Potter wants to be an auror?!"

Ryan nodded. "How long do you think he'll last, two hours?"

Severus laughed. "Maybe being a death eater would be better than I thought..."

Eliza looked up. Madam Pince was closing the library. "I guess we'd better get going," she said.

Harry nodded, and headed for the door. Madam Pince scowled at them as they left the room.

Draco hung back a bit as they left. "Hermione? Can I talk to you?"

Hermione looked confused, but nodded and walked towards Draco. "What is it?"

Draco glanced down the hall, to make sure no one was listening. "First off, I really want to say I'm sorry for calling you a mudblood," he said, wincing, as though the apology was hurting him.

"You already..." Hermione started.

"That was an act, and you know it," Draco glared at Hermione. "You going to listen to me, or not?"

Hermione nodded.

Draco took a deep breath and Hermione frowned slightly as Draco started speaking.

"I don't know..."

"Please?"

Hermione closed her eyes. "Fine. Meet me in the library,"

* * *

The next day was Valentines Day. Eliza, Ron, Hermione, and Harry went down to breakfast a bit earlier then usual. Eliza stared around the dinning hall.

"Draco isn't in here yet, Eliza," Hermione rolled her eyes and sipped her orange juice.

"Did I say I was waiting for Draco?" Eliza crossed her arms and stared at the ceiling.

"Well?" Hermione raised her eyebrows. "Who else would you be waiting for? Pansy Parkinson?"

Eliza snorted and laughed as she started dishing herself up.

Hermione leaned over towards Harry. "You know that Wyrren Malfoy is studying animagus?"

Eliza's head snapped up. "She is?"

"Cool," Ron said. "What kind of animal do you think she'll be? A white ferret?"

Hermione and Harry burst out laughing. Eliza started shaking, her hands over her mouth, as though determined not to laugh.

"I hate ferrets," Draco said. Eliza turned around. Draco was scowling at Ron, his arms crossed. "And that wasn't funny! What if Moody had done that to you?"

"Serves me right if I try to curse someone when their back is turned," Ron said.

Draco sneered.

Eliza sighed. "Ron... Draco... please."

"My sister is learning to be an animagus?" Draco asked, glancing at Hermione.

Hermione shrugged. "There was a book about them on her bed... I saw it when I got that book about Dark Messengers when she was in the hospital wing..."

Draco sat down beside Eliza, glared at Ron and Harry, then grabbed a piece of bacon. "She'll probably be a white tiger, something like that. Something strong and vicious,"

"A tiger...?" Eliza turned her head, considering. "Possibly... but I don't think so. A tiger's strong and smart, but in different ways. Like a tiger is a little too vicious. Wyrren's a little more 'give me an opportunity, oh enemy, and I will break your neck'." Eliza's voice was devoid of emotion as she mimicked Wyrren.

Draco laughed, slipped a rolled up piece of parchment next to Eliza's plate, and left the table, still glaring at Ron.

Eliza unrolled the parchment. A single, red rose fell out of it. Its green thorns gleamed. "Oh..."

One of the papers held a single drawing on it. It was a girl, dancing in the moonlit woods. The colors were all dim and dark, and it was gorgeous. Harry, Ron, and Hermione just stared at it for about a minute before noticing the other parchment.

This one had no drawings on it. It was a poem or a song, Eliza couldn't tell which. Her hands trembled as she read the end of it. Without speaking, she grabbed the rose, the picture, and the poem and ran out of the dinning hall.

"Draco can draw?!" Ron said, running a hand through his red hair.

"He can paint, too. He painted Miranda," Harry said.

"What?!" Ron and Hermione stared at each other, then turned back on Harry, who was carefully ignoring them and going on with his breakfast.

* * *

Eliza reappeared in Charms, the first class of the day, just before the bell rang.

"What was that, Eliza?" Ron asked.

"Oh... Draco just wrote this really, really sweet poem..." Eliza stared off into space for a moment.

"Eliza, did you see what someone had put on my desk?" Hermione beckoned frantically towards the table she always sat at. Two irises and a yellow rose were waiting here, along with a small box of chocolates.

"Who sent them?" Eliza said, looking for a card.

"No note, nothing," Hermione said, a small grin starting to show on her face. "Irises... maybe they're a Ravenclaw..."

Ron rolled his eyes and sat down next to Harry. Professor Flitwick was standing on top of his desk, trying to get the class's attention. They were dealing with complex healing charms now, and the only people who seemed to understand it was Harry, Hermione, and Eliza, who had already confessed that she'd covered the subject last year and it was just review.

"Maybe they're from Victor Krum?" Ron whispered to Harry.

Harry shrugged and grinned. "Maybe,"

Eliza caught the grin on Harry's face. "Maybe not," she muttered.

Chapter Twenty Six

Wyrren Malfoy was still in the common room well after midnight, reading her book on animagus. James stood beside her, reading over her shoulder, explaining exactly what the book was talking about.

"The thing with animagus is, Wyrren, that you can't choose what animal you're going to be. You might have your heard set on becoming a falcon, and turn into a mole instead."

Wyrren looked up briefly. "No magic is too petty to learn, Mister Potter. And this isn't petty at all. It may come in handy someday."

James sighed. "Alright, well, let's go over what we have here. You're incredibly brave, very smart, amazingly strong, and deadly in a patient sort of a way. What kind of animal does that lead up to?"

Wyrren smiled. "Perhaps a tiger," she said. "That's what my brother thought,"

James laughed. "Somehow I don't see you as a tiger, Wyrren. Solitary, yes. But you stick up for people you want to defend. Can you see a tiger risking her life on that song charm last attack? It wasn't as if you were in any danger..."

"True..." Wyrren said, turning back to her book. "Just as long as it isn't a white ferret,"

James smirked a bit. "I dunno... I can kind of see you as a ferret..."

Wyrren glared at James and softly sang one note.

"Ow! All right, all right. You win," James shivered. "I think Lily is a little too good at teaching for her own good,"

Wyrren smiled a bit and turned her attention back on her book.

* * *

Eliza found herself sitting in the library once again the next day. Draco, Hermione, Harry, and Ron were gathered all around her.

And Eliza started telling her story once more.

Severus Snape wasn't invited to the wedding of Lily Clarke and James Potter. Severus closed his eyes bitterly when he had heard about it. So much for Lily Clark...

Deloris put her hand on his shoulder. Instead of shrugging her off like he usually did, though, Severus just remained limp. They were sitting at a small café down Knockturn Alley, a regular hang out for Death Eaters. Deloris had joined the ranks as soon as she had gotten out of school. She called herself

Dredolreis now, although Severus still referred to her as Deloris, whether out of habit or just to annoy her he wasn't sure.

"Severus..." Deloris purred.

"What is it?" Severus snapped.

A lock of Deloris's long, reddish brown curly hair dropped down onto Severus's shoulder. Deloris smiled.

Severus wasn't the least bit impressed. He turned away to look at some of his other friends. Ryan and his wife Jaklin were looking at him, Ryan with a raised eyebrow, as if he couldn't believe Severus was paying no attention to the most beautiful woman for miles around.

Lily is prettier, Severus thought bitterly. Deloris sat down beside him. Severus glared at her for a moment, then stared out the window. There was a red sunset outside. It looked like Lily's hair...

"All right, Severus. I give up," Deloris shook her head and closed her blue eyes. "You have absolutely no interest in me, and if I were to drop dead right now, your only thought would be that you'd get a promotion. Is that right?"

"Yea, that pretty much sums it up." Severus said. "What do you want?"

Deloris loomed up nearer. "You're powerful," she said simply.

"So are you. You've got a higher rank than you should, really." Severus said.

Deloris put her hand on his shoulder. "With you by my side, I could rise higher. With me by your side, you'll gain a much higher rank than you have now. We can help each other."

"Hmm," Severus stared out of the window again. "What do you want, Deloris? You come up to me and bug me almost every day I come here. What did you prophesize I would be your boyfriend or something?" Severus smirked, knowing how proud Deloris was of her talent at divination.

Deloris smiled. "Perhaps," Her face was now so close to Severus's he could see every detail of her face.

Severus stood up and marched away.

"THERE WILL BE A DAY WHEN YOU WON'T JUST WALK AWAY, SEVERUS!" Severus turned. Deloris's eyes were white, rolled back into her head, and her voice was harsh. "THAT TIME IS COMING SOON!"

Severus crossed his arms as Deloris stumbled out of her seat. "In the meantime, Deloris, I would advise you to stop going into trances."

"What...? What did I say?!" Deloris looked from person to person as Severus walked out of the café. Nothing good ever came from Deloris's predictions. Ever.

But the words haunted him. "There will be a time when you won't just walk away, Severus. That time is coming soon..." Severus shivered.

Because if there was one thing Deloris was never wrong at, it was her predictions. And no good ever came of those. Ever.

The wedding of Lily and James was held in a great cathedral months later. Severus didn't attend, although with the crowds of people coming he could've slipped in unnoticed.

That is, until Black or Lupin noticed their old enemy watching. They'd have thought I was trying to curse James. Which wouldn't actually be a bad idea, Severus reminded himself again.

He still went to that little café on Knockturn Alley. Deloris, ever since her prediction, stopped hanging around him so much. She seemed very smug about this.

"Hello, Severus," Deloris said automatically as Severus stepped in the café. Severus ignored her as usual. "You want me to get you something?"

"Since when did you become the waitress?" Severus snapped.

Deloris shrugged and started talking to Jaklin.

"I'll take some beer," Severus told the man behind the counter. He nodded and ducked into the back room.

"Beer? You?" Deloris sat down next to him and crossed her arms.

"Yes, beer, me. Mind your own business, will you?" Severus turned away.

"I'll take some too!" Dredolreis called. There was a grunt of approval somewhere behind the counter.

"Here ya are," the man clunked the two mugs on the table. Deloris smiled and took her cup, but didn't drink any.

"What, too finicky?" Severus asked, taking a swig of his. Oh, that tasted good... he drank a little more, closed his eyes, and leaned back.

Apparently he hadn't taken as much as he though he had. His cup was still nearly full when he opened his eyes again, although Deloris seemed to have nearly drained her entire mug.

"What, too finicky?" Deloris mocked him, holding her cup. Severus grabbed the handle of his drink and had some more...

But... this couldn't be right! He had barely had anything, and the room was starting to swirl before his eyes. He felt strangely lightheaded, although he could feel someone's hand on his shoulder. Trying to help him keep his balance? Yes, that was probably it... the room seemed to be tipping...

The arms moved from his shoulder to around his neck. Someone was kissing him... was it Lily? The light was dark, but her hair was slightly red... it was hard to focus on it...

After that nothing seemed to make any sense.

Three months later...

Deloris smiled at Severus sweetly. Severus looked at her, then to the wedding ring sitting on his finger. Somehow Deloris's predictions always seemed to come true... He didn't really mean to marry her... it was a stupid, impulsive decision, and Severus knew it.

Didn't change anything. Didn't change the fact that James Potter had his Lily. Didn't change the fact that James had a good life. Didn't change anything at all...

Eliza stopped talking.

Hermione, Harry, Ron, and Draco all looked up at her anxiously. "What happens next?" Ron asked.

"We go to bed, that's what happens next. I have to study for the OWL's too." Eliza yawned. "Besides, my voice is going hoarse. I'll tell more later."

* * *

Diawna paced back and forth on the Hogwarts lawn, right at the edge of the forbidden forest, so she could get off the Hogwarts grounds in a hurry if Eliza came along.

Diawna glared at the castle again. There. That was where Wyrren was, in the Gryffindor tower. Diawna hesitated, fingering her wand, then grabbed her broomstick and flew towards the castle.

"Wyrren, wake up!" Lily said, wishing she could have shoved Wyrren, anything! "Diawna's coming."

"I'm awake..." Wyrren blinked at the foggy form of Lily. "Where is she?"

"Coming on broomstick," Lily said promptly.

"Oh. That," Wyrren giggled. "She's come to put me under the imperius curse, just like she did to her twin? She doesn't have much imagination, does she?"

Wyrren stood up, her silver night robes shinning in the moonlight as she walked towards the window. “Get Dumbledore. I’ll make you solid in twenty seconds,”

“Wyrren, what are you doing?” Lily asked, then rushed out of the room.

Wyrren stood at the window, in plain view of Diawna, who was circling the tower on her broomstick.

@

Diawna frowned. Something screamed at her that something was amiss... the necromancer’s ghosts must have warned Wyrren of her approach... but why was she at the window then?

Diawna waved her wand. The glass vanished.

“Know this, Diawna,” Wyrren’s small voice echoed strangely. “You can not fight me. You can not triumph over me. I will break every spell, repel every charm that you set in my way,” Her face was blank and emotionless. She said this casually, although anyone who knew Wyrren would have shuddered and retreated a bit at the steel and ice she encased in these words.

Diawna hesitated.

Now! Wyrren closed her eyes and opened her arms wide, focusing on making Lily more solid, more realistic, more lifelike then she’s ever attempted before.

Diawna pointed her wand at Wyrren. Wyrren released her hold on Lily. Now was the time she’d need her strength...

“Imperio!” Diawna roared.

Wyrren stayed shock still for a moment. Then, in one, liquid motion, she lifted one arm up, as if she were reaching for the sky.

Jump out of the window, Diawna ordered. Jump out of the window...

Wyrren made a fist suddenly. The imperius curse broke instantly. Diawna rocked backwards a bit.

Suddenly the air was full of jetting light Wyrren turned a bit. A scarlet streak was rushing at Diawna. A green jet of light followed.

Diawna’s eyes widened and she dove as fast as she could towards the ground.

Wyrren turned away from the window and sat back down on her bed.

“What did you do, Wyrren?” Lily demanded, popping back into view.
“I... I could almost have shaken him awake! It was almost as if I were solid...”

Wyrren slumped on the bed and passed out.

Chapter Twenty Seven

“Wyrren and I are staying at Hogwarts,” Draco said. “I don’t care what any of the teachers say, we’re not spending Easter or summer holiday with our parents,”

Harry nodded and glanced at the door again. They were sitting in an empty classroom, waiting for Eliza, Ron, and Hermione to show up. Draco had covered all his paintings with white sheets, so no one would see them.

“You realize how long Eliza has stretched her story out?” Draco asked. “I’ve been hearing this for months now. Eliza always stops in the middle of the good parts,”

“She’s good at that, I’ve noticed. Have you seen Wyrren lately, by the way?”

Draco sneered. “You’d know better then I would. She is in Gryffindor, after all,”

“She’s been in the hospital wing for over a week now,” Harry said. “Ever since Diawna showed up again,”

Draco shrugged. “I never did like Wyrren much. She’s creepy. It’s almost as if she’s two different people at times, combined in one.”

The door opened. “Ok, sorry I’m late Draco. Wyrren just got out of the hospital wing, and she wanted to see you,” Eliza, Hermione, Ron, and Wyrren stepped through the door. Wyrren’s face was emotionless, but her blue eyes seemed to always be alert and moving.

“You still studying to be an animagus, Wyrren?” Draco asked.

Wyrren nodded. “I have a good teacher. With any luck, I should be able to transform by the end of second year,”

Teacher? Harry frowned.

“Who’s teaching you?” Hermione asked. “You know it’s illegal to attempt to be an animagus without registering with the ministry and...”

“I’m perfectly aware of the ministry’s rules. To be honest, I am not concerned with them.” Wyrren said smoothly. Hermione stopped talking at once. Wyrren turned to Harry. “You know who’s teaching me,”

Harry just looked confused. Ron picked up a chair from the far end of the room and sat down. “Eliza, I’m suffering. I need more of your story.”

Draco, Hermione, and Harry nodded. Wyrren didn’t make any response.

“Oh... all right... more story. Fine.” Eliza got her own chair, sat down, and closed her eyes.

It had been nearly two years since the wedding of Severus and Deloris Snape. Severus sat down on the sofa with a book. A small squeal from the occupant of the next seat drove his attention away from his reading.

Severus frowned at the baby girl. Was this Eliza or Diawna? He wasn't sure... Deloris had taken to painting their finger nails different colors to tell them apart, denim blue for Diawna and green for Eliza, but the nail polish had almost totally worn off. Severus smiled a bit and picked the baby up, examining her fingers. Blue, this was Diawna. He smiled and put her on the floor, watching with amusement as Diawna grabbed his finger with one tiny hand and tried to stand up, then crashed back down on the floor and crawled away at top speed.

The sound of Deloris's chanting ended Severus's good mood. Deloris had been trying to combine the dark arts with her divination, so she could make prophecies on command and be able to hear them herself. Severus shook his head. If truth be told, he still didn't like Deloris that much. Diawna and Eliza, on the other hand, meant everything in the world to him.

"Yes!" Deloris strode out of her bedroom. "I did it, Severus!" A huge grin was pasted on her face, and her blue eyes sparkled.

"What did you do?" Severus asked, afraid of the answer.

"I found a way to go into a trance on command!" Deloris smiled even wider.

Oh, no. Anything but that. Severus smiled weakly, then looked around for Eliza or Diawna. Neither was in sight.

"Do you know what that means?! I can direct what I prophesize about, and I'll be able to remember it! Here, I'll show you. I'll make one about Eliza and Diawna." Deloris sat down on the floor and started chanting.

"No, Deloris, don't!" Severus stared at her in horror. "Please, no!"

Deloris didn't seem to hear him. She just sat chanting, her chants going lower and lower, and lower.

Severus closed his eyes. Nothing good ever came out of Deloris's predictions. Last time she made a prediction, she said that a black haired man by the name of Potter would be the dark lord's downfall and death. Voldemort had been searching for James Potter and his son Harry ever since.

Deloris sat up suddenly. Her eyes were dead white. "ONE SHALL BE VOLDEMORT'S CHOSEN HEIR! THE OTHER SHALL DIE BEFORE SHE TURNS SIXTEEN. ONE SOUL SHALL PERISH IN AGONY. THE OTHER WILL LIVE HAPPILY EVER AFTER!"

Deloris sat for a moment very still, then stood up, triumph gleaming in her eyes.

Much to her astonishment though, she saw Severus was shaking in anger, his hands clenched into fists. "How dare you..." he whispered. "I have half a mind to just turn you into the ministry right now..."

Deloris's eyes flashed. She turned and stormed into the next room. Severus followed her.

Deloris picked up one of the twins and whirled around. Severus stopped dead in his tracks. Deloris was pressing a knife to her throat. "One shall die, Severus. Betray our cause, and I will make sure she dies a little sooner than planned."

"You... you're insane!" Severus backed up.

"Swear... swear that you won't betray us..." Deloris growled.

Us... she was talking about the entire army in the service of Lord Voldemort. Right now going to the other side seemed like a really good deal. Severus hung his head. "I swear. Put her down, please!"

Deloris dropped her roughly. The twin, Severus didn't even care which one it was, started wailing. Severus scooped her into his arms and stared at her.

One shall die before she turns sixteen, one shall be Voldemort's chosen heir... Deloris had predestined one of them to be an evil little dark witch. The other, dark or not, was dead.

"I have to get out of here," Severus whispered. The girl struggled out of his arms and crawled at top speed towards her sister.

Severus picked both Eliza and Diawna up, then apperated away.

Dumbledore was sitting at his desk when Severus burst in his office. He looked horrible, his eyes were wide, and he was carrying two tiny identical girls. "I need to speak to you, sir!" he gasped, setting the girls down gently.

Dumbledore nodded once. Severus launched into an explanation of Deloris, the twins, how he had to get away from Voldemort. Dumbledore just sat and listened, never interrupting.

Severus finished his story and stood before Dumbledore, the only wizard Voldemort feared.

Dumbledore stood up. "You could stay here at Hogwarts," he said slowly. "If this isn't safe, no where is. However..."

"Yes?" Severus asked apprehensively.

Dumbledore seemed unusually solemn. "We have very few spies. Fewer still with connections to high-ranking Death Eaters. If you were to go back to Lady Dredolreis and keep me informed of their doings..."

Severus held his breath.

"If you merely are seeking sanctuary from Voldemort, you may stay here. If you wanted to work against him... we have need of you,"

"I would be risking everything..." Severus said, shaking his head. But didn't he have almost nothing to lose? One of them would be dying anyway...

Dumbledore said nothing.

"I'll do it," Severus looked up. "Anyway I can help, I will."

Dumbledore smiled.

"And... and one more thing..." Severus said. "Voldemort's next target is James and Harry Potter."

Severus went back to Deloris, apologizing for his actions and lapping on praise for her discovery in divination. Deloris had smiled a bit, although her eyes remained cold. It was only after Severus had kissed her, voluntarily, that she seemed reassured.

Severus went back to Dumbledore several times, although he no longer brought Eliza and Diawna. He learned that James was going to use the fidelus charm to escape Voldemort, using Sirius Black as their secret keeper.

Severus wasn't sure how he felt about this. Someone very close to the Potter's had been giving out information to Voldemort. Maybe the werewolf, maybe one of Lily's friends, but most likely Sirius Black. James wouldn't listen though. He insisted on using Sirius Black, and told Severus if he really wanted to help, he'd go through the death eaters and find the traitor himself.

Months past. Deloris had made one more prediction in the middle of August: "TRAGITY WILL STRIKE ON BOTH SIDES HALLOWEEN. THE GUILTY WILL GO FREE, AND THE INNOCENT WILL BE CONDEMED."

As much as Severus had tried to interpret this, however, nothing seemed to fit. What on earth was she talking about? Anything at all to do with James? She said it was a prophecy on Potter's fate...

Then it happened. Halloween night, one week after James and Lily had performed the fidelus charm, with Sirius Black as their secret keeper as they had planned. The house had been blown apart, almost falling over. James and Lily Potter had been found dead, although rumor had it was that Harry Potter was still alive. Rumor also had it Voldemort had been vanquished.

Severus rushed to Godric's Hallow. Why on earth would Lily be dead?! Voldemort wanted nothing to do with her, it was James and Harry he wanted...

The house was in ruins. Severus stared up at the roof uneasily, as though it was going to fall in on him. Someone was inside, sobbing.

"Lumos!" Severus whispered.

It was Sirius Black, crouching over the body of James Potter. Sirius slowly looked up. "Who is that?" he asked, fumbling for his wand.

"Don't try anything, Black." Severus snarled.

"Snape," Sirius stood up. "What do you want?"

"You were the Potter's secret keeper, Black. You betrayed them," Severus sneered at Sirius. "I wonder why Potter ever trusted you,"

Sirius didn't move. His face fell, and he turned back towards James, shaking. Severus frowned. He had been expecting Sirius to attack him, like he had always done at school. "You... you're wrong... all right, I am responsible... but... oh, you wouldn't understand,"

I understand more than anyone gives me credit, Severus thought. He raised his wand.

Too late. Sirius apparated, leaving Severus alone in the creaking house.

Severus walked forward, past James's body, towards the back of the house. There. Severus ducked down beside the body of Lily Potter.

Severus whispered something. A voice, a woman's voice whispered from the wand. "No, not Harry! Please not Harry! Kill me instead!..."

Lily had died to save Harry Potter? Severus stood up. Thinking hard.

Then it was Harry Potter's fault she was dead. If he hadn't been there, Lily still would have been alive. His fault, all his fault...

No, a tiny voice in the back of his head whispered to him. It's Deloris's fault! She was the one who made that prediction in the first place.

Severus shook his head slowly and marched home.

Many of the Death Eaters had been rounded up and caught. Not Deloris, though. Ryan and Jaklin were put in Azkaban. Several other of his friends were killed by Aurors. Sirius Black, after murdering twelve muggles and Peter Pettigrew, was thrown in Azkaban with many of the other people. Karkaroff had wormed his way out of Azkaban somehow. Many Death Eaters had gotten away clean.

No one had accused Severus. Seriously, that is. Remus Lupin, Potter's werewolf friend, had said some nasty things about 'some people' switching sides last moment, but that was about it.

Dumbledore offered Severus a job teaching potions at the school, which Severus gladly took. Being away at Hogwarts most of the year beat staying at home with Deloris any day, although sometimes Severus was tempted just to stop by and bring Eliza and Diawna up to the castle with him. He never tried it, though. Getting close to Eliza and Diawna would mean he would be even more hurt when one of them died, and making a personal enemy when the other joined Voldemort's ranks.

He never did get the job he really wanted though: defense against the dark arts. He studied the subject extensively, just in case he had to use it against Deloris.

Deloris, in the meantime, was still researching the dark arts, but in such a way that nothing she used could be traced back to her.

Eliza stopped speaking.

“You’re stopping now?” Draco groaned.

“No... it’s just... I remember this part. I’m going to switch to a personal narration,” Eliza said.

“Well, keep going then,” Ron said. “This is interesting.”

Eliza smiled and continued.

All that changed the summer I turned six years old. Diawna and I were best friends, and we did everything together. Absolutely everything.

One day, Father happened to be home, for a change. Diawna and I never really knew how to relate to Father, but he was nice, a lot nicer than mother, at times.

Still, we tried to avoid everyone, especially since we were so good at getting into trouble.

It was my idea to go play dress up with some of Mother’s jewelry. Diawna loved the idea, so we sneaked up to her music box.

I opened the box. There were some lovely golden earings there, but neither Diawna or I had pierced ears, so we moved on. Diawna quickly emptied it. She had gotten better jewelry than I did, so I started shaking the box to see if any more would come out.

The bottom fell off. Diawna gasped. A lovely green necklace fell out, along with several other pieces, some of them, quite gory and deathlike.

“Beautiful!” Diawna picked the necklace up and admired it.

“Let me put it on! You got more than me!” I grabbed the chain.

“No... here, Eliza, you can have this one,” Diawna pulled a bead necklace off her neck.

“No, I want this one. Come on, Diawna...” I pulled harder.

“Stop it!” Diawna yanked it back. “I got it first!”

“I found it!” I yelled back.

Boom.

The door crashed open. Father, a sneer of disgust on his face stood in the doorway. It suddenly occurred to me that Diawna and I weren't allowed in this room...

But Father didn't seem at all angry. A broad, triumphant smile crossed his face as he grabbed the necklace up, then he turned and scooped the other things in the music box up.

Diawna and I waited in silence. "Why is he just standing there?" Diawna asked me silently. We had our own little language, where you didn't need to speak to tell each other things.

"Maybe we found something of his that was lost," I answered her in the same way.

Father left the room without giving us a second glance. Diawna immediately switched to speaking out loud. "He took it!"

I nodded. "Let's follow him, see where he puts it. Then we can steal it back, if he doesn't see us,"

Diawna grinned and nodded. We followed Father into the attic.

"What's he doing?" Diawna asked silently.

"Watch," I replied.

Father hid the jewelry in the wall and turned around. Diawna and I ran back downstairs.

"Eliza, Diawna," he called.

"What?" we asked.

"Here, I got you some chocolate," Father smiled. Diawna shot me a confused glance, but took the cauldron cake.

"Don't you want some, Eliza?" Father asked.

I nodded and held out my hand.

"Now, I want you two to go in the back yard. Do not come back in the house until I say you can, alright?"

Diawna and I nodded and left the house. "What was that all about?" Diawna asked.

"I don't know," I shrugged and started on my cake.

Mother arrived in the front yard. I could hear her as she tripped on the neighbor's cat. Diawna and I laughed.

"Do you think we can come back in yet?" I asked Diawna after a minute or so.

"I don't think so..." Diawna frowned.

"You...!" Mother screeched through the house.

"They're fighting AGAIN?" Diawna's face fell. "Why can't we just have normal parents who get along?"

Father was yelling, too. All of a sudden, a bolt of silver light shot through the house, countered by a black bolt. Again and again I saw jets of powerful magic flash in the windows.

"They're trying to kill each other?" Diawna asked. "We should stop them, something!"

"We can't do anything..." I said. "We'll get in trouble... and Father told us to stay here!"

Diawna hesitated, but stayed with me. We were only one person after all. Identical in almost every way, unseparatable. And Diawna was always by my side, just as I always was at hers.

Finally, much, much later, the house was still.

"You think it's safe now?" Diawna whimpered.

"I don't know..." I said. "Maybe they killed each other."

Diawna shrugged. "Know any good orphanages around here? Let's go check,"

We approached the house. Suddenly, the back door burst open. Father was standing there, looking like he was about to collapse. "Eliza, Diawna, in the house," Father said. "You need to get packed."

"Packed?" Diawna asked. "Where are we going?"

"Away. I don't care where, just out of England." Father said. "Where ever Deloris ends up, anyway."

"We're moving away?" I asked.

"I'm not coming," Father said.

So this was how it was going to turn out. I nodded dully. I had been expecting something like this to happen forever, as long as I could remember at least. Diawna and I left for our room. We packed bags full of our things, our few toys, our robes, our muggle outfits. Mother was waiting for us, and within an hour, Diawna and I were certain we would never come back.

Father didn't even say goodbye.

Eliza stopped. "I have to change narration again," she said, smiling sadly.

"Go on," Hermione prompted.

Eliza nodded and continued.

Severus had been working at Hogwarts for almost ten years now. He never did get the job he wanted, defense against the dark arts, which got handed from poor teacher to poor teacher.

This year, the position would belong to Professor Quirrel, a stuttering man who seemed perpetually terrified of his subject.

Diawna and Eliza would be starting school, this year. He got a letter from Diawna once, asking if he remembered them. He never answered that letter.

Minerva McGonagall walked up to the front of the hall and put down the sorting hat, took out a scroll from her robe pocket, and started reading off names. Severus saw, with some satisfaction, that Lucius Malfoy's son was among the new students. Beyond him...

Severus stared. Beyond Draco, right beside a tall boy with freckles, was a younger version of James Potter. The boy turned. Severus's hands balled up into fists as he saw the eyes, the wonderful green eyes he had admired Lily for so often. It was as if his old enemy had come back from the dead to taunt him.

Severus closed his eyes, once again wishing the new James a slow, painful death. Once again, a picture of James fighting the werewolf for him popped into his head.

"I swore once I would pay you back, James. I will, never fear. I'll do something to save Potter's skin, then we'll be even." Severus muttered under his breath as Potter, Harry walked up to the line, biting his lip and looking extremely nervous.

"Gryffindor!"

"That's pretty much it," Eliza said, yawning. "Hey, Wyrren, I was wondering, can you sing? Without the song charm? I've never heard you sing normally..."

Wyrren nodded. "Draco, would you like to back me up?"

"What song?" Draco said, almost automatically, then shook himself. "No, wait, never mind. I don't sing..."

Wyrren frowned. "Draco, you can sing almost as well as I can,"

"Well, maybe. But I'm not singing." Draco said. Ron grinned. Draco was turning pink.

Wyrren shook her head. "What song?"

Hermione shrugged. "Any song."

A small smile played around Wyrren's face. "Alright... then, have it your way." Wyrren closed her eyes and sang one note. This time, there was no charm, no magic around it, besides the fact that Wyrren sounded like an angel.

Music boxes have within
Melodies they carry with them
Once they open music fills the air

Every person you have known
Has a song of their own
Once they open up you can hear what's there

It's not easy, you must listen
With your heart for what lies hidden

There was a melody
Locked deep inside of me
But now it's free!
It found a place embraced by harmony,
Sweet harmony

Love more than anything
Teaches our hearts to sing
Only Love could break the shell
Now I know very well
The Love within myself

(-from the movie 'Rigoletto')

Wyrren stopped singing.

Only Draco didn't seem stunned. "Your low E was a bit high," he said.
"You need to practice more,"

Wyrren nodded. "Yes, I noticed, but by then it was too late to correct it without making it obvious. I don't sing as much as I used to,"

"That... that was incredible," Eliza's mouth was hanging open. "Oh, please, sing something, Draco,"

Draco turned pink. "I don't sing," he muttered.

"Amazing. Oh, Harry," Hermione said. "I meant to ask you, you didn't happen to put those flowers on my desk, did you?"

Harry grinned. "Nope. Not the flowers, at least,"

Hermione frowned. "Ron?"

Ron's ears turned red. "Oh, thanks a lot, Harry!"

"I put the chocolates there." Harry grinned. "Hope you had a nice Valentines Day, by the way."

Hermione opened her mouth, then closed it again.

Ron smiled and stared at the ceiling.

Chapter Twenty Eight

Told by Hermione

"Hermione, you realize that Ron and Harry didn't mean anything by those flowers and candy, don't you?" Eliza asked.

I looked up from my book on runes. "What?"

Eliza took her hair out of its bun and started playing with it. "You heard me,"

I looked back at my book. "I suppose," I muttered. "I'm not exactly stupid. The rose was yellow. The friendship rose."

Eliza raised her eyebrows and cocked her head to one side; her skeptical look. "Then why were you staring at them all through charms class?"

My face turned red. "No I wasn't," I muttered. And I hadn't been staring at them all through class. I was just glancing at them now and then to see if they were looking at me, which they weren't. Trust Eliza to pick up on something like that. It was months past Valentines day anyway, almost the end of May. I'd been studying for the OWL's like a maniac.

Eliza crossed her arms, shook her head, and walked away. Then, she stopped dead. "Harry..."

Oh, no. I put both hands on my face. Why was Eliza doing this to me? I turned around to tell her off.

Eliza was standing in front of a silvery ghost of a very pretty young woman. Harry turned and stared at it. I didn't recognize her, but apparently Harry did. His jaw was hanging open and his glasses were about to fall off.

I got up and walked closer. It was rather late at night, but the few people in the common room had gone dead silent. Was that Harry's mum? She looked like Lily, from the descriptions I'd heard...

"Mum?" Harry asked.

The ghost nodded. I looked around the room for Wyrren. She was sitting at a table, her eyes almost closed, her hand extended towards the ghost.

Wyrren started swaying. The ghost became even more life like, complete with color. She looked almost solid. Wyrren... was it my imagination, or was she lacking color?

"Wyrren! Don't!" Lily shouted, turning her head from Harry.

"What's she doing?" Harry asked.

Lily tried to glide over to Wyrren. She tripped over a table. Harry, it must have been a reflex, grabbed her arm and pulled her up.

Wyrren looked like a ghost.

Harry's face drained of color. "You're... you're... solid..."

"Not for long, Harry. Wyrren... she's over doing it again. I told her..."
Lily shook her head. "Harry, can I barrow your wand?"

Harry handed Lily his wand, his mouth still open with astonishment.

Lily grabbed it, although she seemed to have a hard time holding it. She pointed it at Wyrren and shouted something, the words weren't clear. Wyrren became solid and collapsed. Lily disappeared. Harry's wand fell to the floor with a clatter.

No one in the room moved. I could see Ron, his red hair standing up on end. Fred and George Weasley were frozen to the spot, their bags of tricks forgotten by the fire. Neville Longbottom looked as though he had the body bind put on him. Harry... Harry was blinking furiously.

"Wyrren?" he asked.

Wyrren slowly tried to stand up, then fell to the ground. Harry ran towards her. "Are you alright, Wyrren?"

Wyrren didn't answer. "Hermione! Ron, help me!" Harry struggled to pick her up. Ron and I rushed over to help Harry.

"Is she alright?" Eliza asked.

I checked Wyrren's pulse. "She'll live... we need to get her over to the hospital wing, though,"

"What was that?" Ron asked. "I've never seen anything like that!"

"No clue," Eliza said, shaking her head. "I mean, I knew that Wyrren was a necromancer, but I had no idea she was so powerful..."

Harry conjured stretchers out of midair and floated Wyrren on them. "Hermione, I think we're really going to need to learn how to work that life giving charm," he said quietly.

* * *

"Have I mentioned I hate potions?" Ron asked as he, Eliza, Harry, and Hermione walked down the stone stairs to the potions classroom on the last day of May. Eliza, who had been incredibly jumpy all day so far, spun around very quickly.

"Yes, I believe you have, Ron," Hermione shook her head.

Eliza sighed. "Well, at least you're not related to the potions master," she muttered.

Harry, who had been very quiet ever since seeing his mum, didn't comment.

The potions class was a bit different than Harry remembered. Snape had a haunted look about him, and he barely made any rude comments on the Gryffindors until the end of class.

"Eliza!" he snapped, walking towards the Gryffindors. Draco's eyes narrowed.

"What?" she asked bleakly.

Snape sneered. "I do not believe your potions was to look like porridge, Miss Snape. Ten points from Gryffindor! I'll expect you to do it right, next time."

Draco sneered. Snape did have a point, this time though. Eliza's potion did look rather lumpy, even though it was quite thin. Eliza shrugged. She really didn't seem to care much.

Snape noticed. "Miss Snape," he hissed like a snake. Most of the Slytherins were looking very happy. Draco wondered if he should punch Pansy and get Snape's mind off Eliza. "It would do you good to get your potion right. You wouldn't want to be remembered for your poor work, would you?"

Eliza drew her breath in suddenly, and stood up bolt upright. "You... you don't even care..." Eliza looked horrified. She backed up slowly, then ran out of the room as fast as she could.

Snape didn't try to stop her. He sneered, crossed his arms, and strode back to his desk. Harry frowned. It might have been a trick of the light, but Snape looked like he was shaking.

Draco was looking murderous, but he didn't leave. He just walked over to Harry. "What was that about?"

* * *

Eliza ran from the room as fast as she could, then sprinted across the school lawn towards her favorite place on the grounds: the weeping willow, a

tree on the edge of the lake. It was so peaceful there... sometimes she and Draco could just sit there and talk for hours.

The weeping willow was a lovely tree, with long branches skimming the ground, looking like a tent of yellow and green. Eliza crawled inside.

"What are you doing here?"

Eliza looked up. A girl was peering down at her from one of the higher branches.

"Diawna," Eliza hissed. "What do you want?"

"Put your wand down, Eliza," Diawna said slowly. "I'm not here to fight you,"

"Then what do you want?" Eliza asked.

"I just came here for some peace, same as you," Diawna said, climbing down. She looked exactly like Eliza, feature for feature.

Eliza didn't move. "Any real reason I should believe that, Diawna?"

Diawna landed on the ground. She looked Eliza right in the eye. "You know me, Eliza. I just want to talk to you,"

Eliza thought about that for a moment, then sat down. "I suppose," she said softly.

Diawna sat down next to her. "You know, I still really think we are the same person, after all," she said slowly. "Remember when we'd tell each other that?"

Eliza nodded. "Sorry, Diawna, I've just had a really, really bad day. You know what Severus is like when he's mad or worried?"

Diawna shivered. "Somehow, I don't think I want to find out,"

"No, you don't," Eliza said.

"Since when did you start calling him 'Severus' by the way?" Diawna asked. "You always called him 'Father' before you came here,"

"That was before I knew what he was like." Eliza said shortly. "Everyone but some of the Slytherins hate Severus. With good reason, too, I might add,"

Diawna nodded. "You know what tomorrow is, don't you, Eliza?"

Eliza laughed bitterly. "So that's why you're not trying to murder me," she said. "You figure I'll be dead by midnight anyway, so why bother? Right?"

"One of us will be," Diawna said heavily. "Stupid prophecy. Did I mention that Mother was executed?"

"I know," Eliza said. "Good riddance, I say. Your work? What did you do, frame her for treachery or something?"

Diawna laughed. "No need, actually. She got herself killed. Started predicting things Voldemort didn't want to hear about."

Eliza didn't respond.

Diawna stopped laughing. "Look, Eliza... sister? I know, we've gone our separate ways and... well, I wish this had turned out differently. I really do. I'd love to be at Hogwarts with you, making fun of Father, playing our jokes and stuff on the caretaker, all that bit, but we've each got our place to fulfil. My place is second in command to the Dark Lord. You understand that, don't you? I just don't want to be on the bad side of this prediction. That's all there is between us, really. You know that, don't you Eliza?"

"Why so sentimental all of a sudden?" Eliza asked.

Diawna shook her head. "Eliza, look. We're never going to see each other again. One of us could drop down dead any moment. I don't want to regret anything."

Fat chance of that happening, Eliza thought sourly. Eliza stood up. "Good bye, then, Diawna,"

"Good bye, Eliza," Diawna said. She looked like she meant it.

Eliza stood up slowly. Then she heard it.

* * *

Harry, Ron, Hermione, and Draco walked along the grounds, near the edge of the lake. "Eliza!" Draco called.

Hermione sighed. "Where is she? Harry, do you have your map?"

"Left it inside the castle," Harry muttered.

"What map?" Draco asked.

"Long story," Ron said quickly. "Maybe she's at the quidditch field..."

"Awh!" Harry screamed suddenly, fighting to stay on his feet.

"Harry, what's wrong!?" Hermione said. Harry was clutching his scar with both hands.

"Don't move,"

Harry let go of his head. He looked horrified. He remembered that voice...

Harry, Ron, Hermione, and Draco turned together. A tall man in a black cloak was holding a wand pointed at them. His eyes were a glowing red, and his face resembled a snake. Beside him was a much shorter man, his head completely covered by his hood. Harry's eyes were drawn at once to his hand, which was a pale silvery metal. It was Peter Pettigrew... also known as Wormtail.

"Voldemort," Harry said softly. He, Hermione, Ron, and Draco took an involuntary step backwards. Draco looked terrified.

"Any last words, Potter?" Voldemort said lazily.

Draco's eyes grew even wider. Eliza had appeared right outside the whomping willow, and was running towards them.

Harry didn't seem to be able to speak. Voldemort grinned. "I'll take that as a 'no'."

Voldemort raised his wand.

"**EXPELLIARMUS!!**" Eliza roared. Wormtail and Voldemort's wands were thrown out of their owner's hands. Voldemort whirled around, looking murderous.

Eliza threw three wands into the lake. Hers, Wormtail's, and Voldemort's. Diawna, inside the willow still, made no move to help her master.

Voldemort stared at her for a split second. Then, in one swift motion, he drew a dagger from his robes and hurled it at Eliza.

Time seemed to stop.

"Nooo!" Draco screamed, drawing out his wand.

Eliza didn't even have time to dodge the dagger. She screamed as it hit her chest, then collapsed in a heap.

"Eliza!" Draco pointed it at Voldemort. "Crucio!"

Voldemort fell to the ground and shrieked. Hermione and Ron looked stunned for a moment, then started firing curses. Wormtail's hood came off, and he looked terrified and helpless.

Suddenly Voldemort stopped screeching. He had turned himself into a huge, king cobra. Harry gapped.

Voldemort was an animagus...

Voldemort turned towards the forest and sprinted away. His path was suddenly blocked by a huge, black dog.

"Sirius!" Harry yelled. "Get out of here!"

The cobra rose to its full, and considerable height and bared its long fangs.

Harry's mind raced. What was the one thing in the world that almost all snakes feared? He immediately thought of Glen and smiled slightly. Of course.

He pointed his wand towards the huge cage next to Hagrid's hut and shouted a spell. The cage exploded. At least seven Spiked Eagles flew out.

The snake struck at Sirius. Sirius jumped back, barely in time. The snake struck again.

The eagles saw the cobra and shrieked in triumph. The cobra looked up and sprinted across the lawns in the other direction, towards where Eliza lay. Wormtail, suddenly finding himself facing Sirius, raced after Voldemort as fast as he could. Sirius raced after Wormtail.

The eagles followed the cobra, swooping down at him. Voldemort turned back into a human.

Draco raised his wand. Voldemort lunged at something on the lawn and disappeared.

“A portkey?” Harry asked. “Why on earth would he set up a portkey here?”

“Eliza!” Draco ran towards the figure on the grass. Sirius immediately returned to human form. Draco didn’t seem to notice.

Hermione, Ron, and Harry rushed over to Eliza. She was laying on the grass, her eyes half closed.

“Is she...?” Harry asked.

“No...” Eliza sputtered. “Not... not yet.”

“Quick, Harry! Ron!” Hermione sat down next to Eliza. “The life giving charm!”

Harry nodded and sat down next to Hermione. Ron did the same. They all started chanting.

Eliza seemed to be having trouble breathing. “Sirius...” she panted, holding up a scruffy, gray rat. “Peter...”

Sirius snatched up the rat. Wormtail squealed with terror. “I’ll go get Dumbledore,” Sirius said, standing up. He ran towards the castle.

“Draco...” Eliza moaned.

“Eliza, don’t worry, you’ll make it,” Draco said. “Please, please, just hold on...” Draco was crying. He barely heard Harry, Hermione, and Ron chanting.

“Draco... will... will you do something for me?” Eliza asked.

“Anything,” Draco said at once.

“Will you... remember me?” Eliza asked. She was shaking uncontrollably.

Draco shook his head in wonder. If he ever were to forget Eliza, even for a moment, it would be nothing less than a miracle. “Always,” he whispered.

“I want to be remembered.” Eliza seemed to be trying to explain something very important to her. “I want to know that I made a difference... that people who don’t know me will know of me. I want to be remembered... not just a name in a phone book,”

Draco just stared at her for a moment. Eliza seemed to be drifting away. He leaned over and started singing the last verse of the poem he had given Eliza for Valentine’s Day, the muggle song lyrics that Hermione had helped him find. Eliza was smiling and crying as he finished. “Draco...”

“Draco!” Eliza pointed to Hermione, Harry, and Ron. They were leaning over, and their skin was colorless, but they were still chanting. “They’ll kill themselves!”

Draco opened his mouth. If he were to stop them... Eliza would die instantly...

"Please! Draco!" Eliza said.

No choice. "Expelliarmus!" Draco pointed his wand at Harry, Hermione, and Ron. Their wands spun out of their hands, and they collapsed on the grass.

"They'll live, Eliza," Draco turned. "Eliza?"

There was no answer.

"Oh, no, please... Eliza!" Draco pulled Eliza's head and shoulders onto his lap.

Eliza didn't reply. Eliza would never reply. She was gone.

Dumbledore came minutes later, taking Hermione, Harry, and Ron away. Draco didn't move for hours. He just sat there, with stroking Eliza's soft curly hair, crying into the late hours of the night. Eliza, the Eliza who meant everything in the world, was gone, and she would never come back.

Diawna watched from the viewpoint of the willow. Her lips curled into a grim smile, and her blue gray eyes danced. "Excellent," she whispered.

Chapter Twenty Nine

Harry dropped down the paper. His eyes were red and blotchy, like those of Hermione and Ron. The headlines read, "Sirius Black: All Charges Cleared!" On the front page there was a picture of Sirius, who looked much better than he did last time his name appeared in the papers.

Hermione stared at the book she was reading. She, Harry, and Ron had been studying for the OWL's like zombies since the death of Eliza. Harry found that the more he studied, the less he had to think about Eliza... It had only been two days since she died.

"Is it time for the funeral yet?" Ron asked. He was incredibly pale from lack of sleep, and his brown eyes had a haunted look about them.

Hermione checked her watch. "Sure, lets go," she muttered. Some of the other Gryffindors were getting ready to leave as well. Wyrren had already gone down to the great hall.

Harry nodded, and all three of them left the common room for the funeral. Professor Snape had cancelled all his classes, for some strange reason, although no one was complaining. Hermione had spent Monday night not eating and repeating the words, "I didn't believe her, she was right," over and over and over. Last time Harry had seen Draco he was pale as a ghost, except for his eyes, which remained constantly red. He hadn't eaten or slept since Eliza had died. The room where he had painted remained empty.

The great hall had once again been colored in black silks. Several of the Slytherins were snickering, doing impressions of Eliza. Harry and Hermione had barely managed to stop Ron and Draco from killing them all with some of the illegal curses his father had taught him.

Draco was sitting at the Gryffindor table once again. None of the Gryffindors minded. A shiny, black casket was set in front of the teachers table, and almost all of the students were grim and silent.

“If Pansy makes one more comment about Eliza, I swear I will curse her so badly...” Draco muttered, glaring at the Slytherin table.

Ron nodded. “It’s strange how we finally agree on something.”

Dumbledore stood up. “We are here to mourn the loss of Eliza Diawna Snape,” he said.

Several of the Slytherin snickered at this point. Snape looked just as emotionless as Wyrren.

“Few students who have passed these doors were as brave as Eliza, as kind hearted, as warm. Eliza seemed to have some mystical power to bring out the best in the people she came in contact with. Eliza was the girl who always seemed to have a smile on her face, who always had a kind word. She stood up to obstacles that are, for most of us, beyond imagining. You didn’t really need to know Eliza to be affected by her. She was the student who always seemed to shine,” Dumbledore paused for a moment.

“Of course she seemed to shine,” Draco said, staring blankly ahead. “Eliza was the stripe of gold in the sunset, the first warm breeze of spring.”

“Her bravery, her friendship, her warmth will be remembered in these halls always. Keep her memory with you, and don’t let her image fade. Like Lee Jordan, Emily Lewus, Cedric Diggory: Remember Eliza Diawna Snape, because we will not see anyone like her ever again.”

“You got that right,” Draco growled, staring at the coffin.

“Who’s Emily Lewus?” Harry asked.

“That third year who died in the first attack,” Hermione whispered back.

“I offer a toast,” Dumbledore said. “To Eliza.”

Every single teacher, Gryffindor, Hufflepuff, and Ravenclaw leapt to their feet. All the Slytherins but Pansy, Clara, Mythicala, Crabbe, and Goyle rose as well.

“To Eliza,” they muttered.

Professor Snape walked from the teacher’s table and walked up to face the casket. It looked like he was in pain. He dropped his arrogant sneer for a moment.

“A hundred points to Gryffindor,” he whispered through gritted teeth. “For Eliza’s bravery,”

* * *

Told by Wyrren Malfoy

I approached the coffin at the very end of the funeral, when people walked by to see Eliza one last time. A pity she had died. My brother was really quite attached to her, and it hurt me a bit to see him starving himself out of grief.

I had no grief. To be honest, I prefer the dead to the living.

Eliza looked very pale, paler than I. Something was very odd about her body, though. Something, I didn't know what it was, but something was humming, snapping and vibrating.

I got very close to her body. Sometimes a ghost will stay close to their body until their funeral. Eliza had a reason to be restless, if anyone did.

Something was wrong. I put my hand on her neck, and screamed.

“Wyrren!” The people were looking at me as if I were mad. The ghosts around me swirled. “What is it?” they cried.

“Wyrren, what's the matter?!” James asked.

“A shade!” I screamed. “Look!”

I yanked down on the color of her robes. A necklace was attached to her skin. I snatched it up. The pendant let go of Eliza at once.

Bad move. The shade floated away from her dead body. The necklace stopped humming.

Shades terrify me. I can barely see them, and due to my gifts with the undead I'm especially vulnerable to them. I backed away from the shadow I could barely see.

“It's just a necklace, Wyrren,” some idiot first year sneered.

Professor Snape grabbed the pendant out of my hand. “No...” he whispered.

The shade turned. She was confused. I backed away and ran from that funeral as fast as my legs would take me.

* * *

Draco Malfoy stared at the dull looking tombstone. The words, “HERE LIES ELIZA DIAWNA SNAPE,” were printed at the top of the stone. The middle was just plain and blank.

Draco dropped a single red rose on the grave. The other flowers of all sizes and colors were mounded high. Somehow his flower seemed insignificant compared to all the other bouquets. The grave had been placed under the branches of the weeping willow, Eliza's favorite tree.

Sirius and Harry watched as Draco took out his wand and started writing words in a silvery white script on the grave. They were the words of the poem that he had given to Eliza on Valentines Day, the song he had sang to her the last moments of her life. The song written by a muggle named John Denver, taken out of Hermione's American CDs.

Perhaps Love is like a resting place
A shelter from the storm
It exists to give you comfort
It is there to keep you warm
And in those times of trouble
When you are most alone
The memory of Love will bring you home

Perhaps Love is like a window
Perhaps an open door
It invites you to come closer
It wants to show you more
And even if you lose yourself
And don't know what to do
The memory of Love shall see you through

Oh, Love to some is like a cloud
To some as strong as steel
For some a way of living
For some a way to feel
And some say Love is holding on
And some say letting go
And some say Love is everything
Some say they don't know

Perhaps Love is like the ocean
Full of conflict, full of change
Like a fire when it's cold outside
Thunder when it rains
If I should live forever
And all my dreams come true

My memories of Love will be of you

Harry walked up to Draco. Draco turned around.

“So, you going to go back to the Slytherins now?” Harry asked him.
“Going to go back to being Snape’s favorite and making fun of Ron’s family?”

Draco looked back towards Eliza’s grave and shook his head. “I’m not going to let all Eliza worked for to be thrown away. I may not be a Gryffindor, I’m still a Slytherin through and through. But I won’t let Eliza’s memory just wash away.”

He turned and walked from Harry and Sirius. “I made a promise,” he muttered. “I won’t let Eliza’s memory be forgotten,”

Chapter Thirty

The results of the OWL’s came out almost two weeks after Eliza died. To Harry’s great surprise, all the extra studying he and Ron had been doing paid off.

“Ten OWL’s!?” Ron stared dumbfounded at his paper.

“I got eleven,” Harry smiled widely.

“Thirteen,” Hermione said.

“If we’re not prefects by next year, Ron, it will be nothing less then a miracle,” Harry said, grinning for the first time in days. “Do you know what the prefect baths are like?!”

“Do you?” Hermione snapped. “You’re not a prefect, so you SHOULD’NT know,”

Harry didn’t say anything. He just grinned sheepishly.

“Thirteen OWL’s...” Ron shook his head. “How many people do you think will bet against me on Hermione’s odds of being head girl?”

“None,” Harry said at once. “You’d have to be dumber then Goyle to take a bet like that,”

“Rats,” Ron said.

“So, I guess you’re going to go live with Sirius now,” Hermione said to Harry.

“Well, Sirius and I were talking about stopping by Aunt Petunia and Uncle Vernon’s house to turn them all into worms,” Harry said, still smiling. “But then we thought Ron’s dad wouldn’t like that much, so Sirius just decided to go see if he can fix his house up. It’s been abandoned for years now,”

“Hey, maybe during the summer Hermione and I can come over to your house for a change,” Ron grinned. “That’s really great, Harry,”

Harry smiled.

* * *

Told by Draco Malfoy

I sat on my bed, my head in my hands. I didn't really want to go to sleep, because if I did, the nightmares would return. Horrible nightmares they were, filled with laughing girls who were struck down dead, again and again. Once the girl was Hermione, another time it was Wyrren. The rest of the time it was Eliza.

I was miserable. I admit it, I had sunken into such a deep state of depression living made me miserable. All I wanted was to be with Eliza.

I blinked. Maybe that was possible... I smiled a bit. I'd get out the same way Eliza got out. I reached for Voldemort's knife, the one that had killed Eliza.

I pointed the knife at my heart. Finally, I would have peace.

I closed my eyes and took a deep breath. The dagger was unbelievably sharp. I pressed it a bit harder.

“No!”

I dropped the knife, looking around wildly. “Eliza?”

No answer. I shuttered, picked up the knife again, and once more prepared to kill myself.

“No! Please Draco, no!”

The voice was faint, faint and unbelievably strained. I didn't really hear it with my ears, but with my soul, if that makes any sense.

I shook my head and picked up the blade once more. The silver words ‘Relinquo’ glittered as I stared at it, then slowly raised it above my heart once more.

“Draco! Listen! I died to save you! Does that mean anything?!” the voice faded out once more.

It sounded like Eliza... I stared at the knife, then flung it away. It skittered on the stone floor, then lay silent.

I fell back on my bed and cried.

* * *

“But it isn’t over,” Hermione said stubbornly as she ate at the farewell feast of the school year. Gryffindor had won the cup, thanks to the extra points from Snape.

“What isn’t over?” Ron asked.

“The prophecy hasn’t been fulfilled yet,” Hermione said. “Look: ‘One shall become You-know-who’s chosen heir,’; check, Diawna was made second in command to you-know-who. ‘The other shall die before she turns sixteen.’; check, Eliza died the day before her birthday. ‘One soul shall perish in agony,’; well, Eliza’s soul certainly didn’t perish, just her body. She’s a shade, according to Wyrren, and that isn’t perishing in agony. ‘The other shall live happily ever after.’ Well, I don’t think Diawna is in such good shape right now. I don’t think she’s going to live happily ever after anytime soon.”

“What’s your point, Granger?” Draco asked.

“The names Hermione, Draco,” Hermione snapped. “This isn’t the end! That’s my point. This is only the first part of the story of Eliza, even if she is dead. There is more then just this!”

Draco sneered. Hermione pretended not to see this, and soon Harry, Ron, and Hermione headed off towards the Hogwarts Express, with Draco and Wyrren waving from the window.

* * *

Harry met Sirius at platform nine and three quarters. Sirius grinned broadly and showed him a huge motorcycle in the parking lot. “Hagrid gave it back to me,” he said. “I think we ought to stop by your Aunt and Uncle’s first, just to pick up your stuff.”

Harry, thinking about the look on Aunt Petunia’s face upon seeing Sirius, immediately smiled broadly. “Right... I’ve got four years of spell books there,” he said. Harry tried to keep from laughing, and failed. Sirius laughed as well as he got on his motorcycle. Harry climbed into the back seat.

The motor roared. Sirius sped off down the street, Harry still laughing. This was going to be the greatest... where ever they turned up.

Epilogue

Hagrid walked towards the whomping willow with quick, sure strides. It was the first week of summer, and the flowers that people had dropped all over

Eliza's grave had gotten rotten and wilted. Hagrid soon cleared the mess of violets, daisies, pansies, tulips, lilies, irises, and the other flower out.

Satisfied that his work was done, Hagrid stopped once more to make sure he hadn't missed anything.

Apparently he had, though. One red rose was still resting there, still just as fresh and beautiful as the day it was picked. The words on the grave and the rose seemed to go together. Hagrid frowned, then walked away.

He came back several times during the summer. And every time he had come, he had found the same thing. A lovely red rose, picked a moment before it's full bloom, tossed at the foot of the grave. And it was always fresh and beautiful. It was Draco's flower. It had remained, even though all the others just wilted away.

And the rose stayed red.

* * *

Draco Malfoy was sitting on his bed. Eliza sat next to him, looking at him rather sadly. She didn't really expect to be like this. She could see alright, but she couldn't hear anything besides the voice of Wyrren the necromancer. The ghosts of James and Lily had disappeared suddenly on the 31st of July. Wyrren didn't seem to mind that much, and soon made friends with the spirit of a young boy with flaming red hair and green eyes, called Justin. Justin had slit his wrist when he was fifteen, although from suicide or murder Justin wouldn't say. Eliza was sure it was suicide.

Eliza started singing. She had a lovely voice now, high and lilting, and a little spooky when she wanted it to be. After Hermione had admitted Draco had gotten that poem from her muggle music, Eliza had demanded to hear the rest. This one was one of her favorites.

Come stop your crying
We will be alright
Just take my hand, hold it tight
I will protect you from all around you
I will be here, don't you cry

For one so small, you seem so strong
My arms will hold you, keep you safe and warm
This bond between us can't be broken

I will be here, don't you cry

You'll be in my heart
Yes, you'll be in my heart
From this day on, now till forever more

Eliza stopped. What was the point? Draco would never hear here... she couldn't hear Draco. She slumped down and wished that shades could cry.

Draco looked around the room. Something about the atmosphere of the room grew much sweeter, Draco wasn't sure what. Something inside him told him to start singing. He picked one of his favorite songs, but for some strange reason, he started in the middle.

You'll be in my heart
no matter what they say
You'll be in my heart
Always

Why can't they understand the way we feel?
They just don't trust what they can't explain
I know we're different, but, deep inside us
We're not that different at all

Eliza stared at Draco. Something huge was happening. Some kind of wild, unknown magic was being formed. She kept on singing.

And You'll be in my heart
Yes, you'll be in my heart
From this day on, now and forever more

Don't listen to them, 'cause what do they know?
We need each other, to have, to hold
They'll see in time, I know...
When destiny calls you, you must be strong
I may not be with you, but you got to hold on
They'll see in time, I know
We'll show them together 'cause

You'll be in my heart
Believe me, You'll be in my heart
I'll be there from this day on,
Now and forever more

You'll be in my heart
No matter what they say
I'll be with you
You'll be here in my heart
I'll be there

...Always...

* * *

Wyrren Malfoy stopped walking suddenly. She was sure she had heard the effects of a song charm, a huge, powerful charm, more powerful than any she had ever sung. One voice... the first one had been lovely and ghostlike, the other low and sweet. Neither one could hear the other, but somehow they had been singing together in perfect harmony and timing, two parts of a duet. The charm told of a binding, unbreakable love...

Wyrren listened for more. It was gone.
Or maybe it had just been the wind...